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[VOL. I.

BIOGRAPHY.

* * The following Biographical Sketch is wholly original, and is prepared, by the assistance of the connexions of the late Dr. Erskine, exclusively for the Congregational Magazine.

Memoir of the Life and Writings of John Erskine, D.D. of Carnock, late one of the Ministers of Edinburgh.

(Concluded from page 513.)

FROM an early period of his life Dr. Erskine had paid much attention to the theological writers of the continent; and in the latter part of it, he had the means of procuring, through his foreign correspondents, copies of the new works of importance, which from time to time appeared. In the writings of Vitringa, Lampe, Witsius, Venema, Deylingius, and others of the same stamp, he had found vast stores of biblical knowledge; and the inexhaustible patience and industry of the Dutch and German theologians, though too much employed on objects of comparative unimportance, often supplied him with information, which he could no where else obtain. What they wrote in Latin or French, had long been accessible to him; but this, so far from satisfying his insatiable thirst for knowledge, only excited his desire to be acquainted with their productions in Dutch and German. With a resolution of which few men are capable, he applied to these languages when far advanced in life, and occupied with many cares and much employment of a different nature; and in the course of a very short time so completely conquered their idiomatical difficulties, as to be able to understand them with ease,

CONG. MAG. NO. 11.

though he could not pronounce a word of either language, his knowledge of them being entirely acquired from books. After this, almost every valuable book connected with his favourite studies, that was published in these languages, was either sent him by his continental friends, or ordered by him through the medium of the booksellers; so that at last he accumulated a very valuable library of Dutch and German literature alone: which at his death was purchased by the Baptist Missionary Society, and such of the books as were proper for their library, are now deposited in the Serampore Mission House.

As the fruits of his knowledge of these tongues, he published, in 1790 and 1797, two volumes, 12mo. consisting chiefly of translations of select passages from modern Dutch, German, and French writers, relating to the doctrines of christianity; and the progress of religion, and irreligion, particularly on the continent. These volumes, entitled, with the Doctor's characteristic modesty, "Sketches and Hints of Church History, and Theological Controversy, chiefly translated and abridged from Modern Foreign Writers," contain a variety of valuable and interesting matter not easily to be obtained elsewhere. An abridgment of abridgments is impracticable, and a detailed account of them cannot be given here. He gives the following

view of them in the first paragraph of the first volume. "The chief design of the following sheets is to impart to others the entertainment and instruction which I have received from foreign writers, as to the history of the earliest ages of christianity, and the present state of religion and theological controversy. Imperfect as the information is which they contain, I flatter myself it is important. In some instances, my work is a free translation; in others an abridgment of select passages in the original writers. Their sentiments when different from my own, I have not disguised. Their opinions of persons and things, which I could not approve, I have not concealed. Without slavishly following their words and expressions, I have endeavoured, though I fear often unsuccessfully, to exhibit, justly, their reasonings, and even their irony, in such plain and forcible language, that the reader might enter into their ideas and feelings. The meaning of my authors I have probably sometimes mistaken: I hope, however, these mistakes seldom or never affect any important fact or argument. My having learned the Dutch and German at an advanced period of life, and without the assistance of a teacher, the candid will sustain as a sufficient apology."

It would be a very desirable thing, if some of our theological journals were to procure the foreign theological works as they appear, and furnish their readers with reviews of them, or with information respecting the state of religion, and the progress of knowledge abroad. This would, no doubt, cost some trouble and expense; but we apprehend it would be amply repaid by their increased circulation, and by the interest which this species of intelligence could not fail to pro-

duce. The facilities of intercourse with the continent are now so numerous, that ignorance of the state of its theological literature is scarcely excusable.

In the second volume of the Sketches, the Doctor had collected some valuable information respecting the progress of popery in the protestant states of the continent; and in one of the articles written by himself, he represents the mutual influence of popery and infidelity on each other, and points out the dangers to be apprehended from them; sentiments which seem to be little regarded by some who profess to regard his judgment in many other things. This occasioned a very abusive anonymous letter, generally ascribed to the catholic priest of Edinburgh, "addressed to the Rev. John Erskine, D. D., on the dangerous tendency of his late Sketches of Church History: by his countenancing the authors, and promoting the designs of the infamous sect of the Illuminati, 1798." This charge was principally founded on the extracts which Dr. Erskine had made from the travels of Nicholai, an eminent Berlin bookseller, who is represented by Robison as one of the chief promoters of Illuminism in Germany, and who, in his writings, had spoken very severely of the sentiments and conduct of the catholics. To this scurrilous pamphlet, Dr. Erskine published immediately a very spirited reply, in which he exposes the misstatements, ignorance, and malignity, of his opponent with much ability. The indecency and folly of representing Dr. Erskine as an abettor of infidelity, might, indeed, have been left to their own fate; but the boldness with which the most unjust statements were made, and the industry with which they were propagated, required that they should be no-

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ties. From the Doctor's reply, we shall extract a single passage in which he speaks of his former work. "The first volume of my Sketches, published May, 1790, was chiefly employed in exposing the doctrines of the pretended new reformers, who may be justly considered as forerunners of the Illuminati, though I had at that time no sufficient materials for a full history of their rise and progress. Of the Illuminati and German union, I could then say nothing, because I knew nothing. In 1792 or 1793, I learned enough, not to satisfy my curiosity, but to convince me of their pernicious plans. Had I thought favourably of them, surely in the above (one of the Sketches) extract, I would not have joined them with the new reformers: I would not have put in Professor Robison's hands, several of the late volumes of Koester, which contained the fullest account of them I had seen: I would not have announced, with pleasure, the forwardness for the press of the Professor's history: and, when it was published, I would not have seized every opportunity in my power of promoting its spread and success."

page 3.

Robison's "Proofs of a Conspiracy," &c. above alluded to, which Dr. Erskine assisted, and so warmly recommended, contains some curious facts, wrought up, as is now generally thought, to a visionary hypothesis of an extended systematic attempt to overthrow all the civil and religious establishments in Europe, and to reduce society to a state of savagery. It produced, however, along with the work of the Abbé Barruel on the same subject, a considerable impression for a time on the public mind. While Dr. Erskine so zealously circulated it, it is to be regretted that he did not, along with his recommendation, bear testimony

against some of the gross mista-
ments, which he could scarcely
be ignorant it contained.

While the Sketches raised some clamour against the Doctor among the ignorant and malicious, they produced many expressions of gratification and thanks from his valuable and distinguished correspondents. Among those who complimented him on their publication, and to whose approbation he could not be indifferent, were Bishop Hurd, and Lord Hailes; the latter not less distinguished as a christian antiquary, than as a profound lawyer; and whose valuable illustrations of the early christian writers, and his answer to Gibbon, besides many other works, do equal honour to his name, and his country.

Dr. Erskine's attention to the state of religion in foreign parts, did not prevent him from watching, with anxious care, its interest in his native country, and in the church with which he was connected. A progressive indifference or positive hostility to evangelical doctrine, an unrighteous lenity towards those who propagated from the pulpits of the establishment the most dangerous sentiments, and a want of principle and sincerity respecting their solemn subscriptions, had long marked the character of not a few of the clergy, and of those judicatories, which, in Scotland, have always been considered the guardians of ecclesiastical purity and doctrinal orthodoxy. It was preserved, however, for Dr. McGill, one of the ministers of Ayr, to attack from the press in the most daring and decided manner the doctrine of the atonement. This he did in a work entitled, "A Practical Essay on the Death of Christ, 1786." This occasioned a variety of publications by various individuals, in defence of the divinity and sacrifice of Christ. But the well known disposition

of the majority in the church courts to support both erroneous and wicked teachers, together with the similarity of sentiment on the part of many of the clergy around Dr. M'Gill, deterred the orthodox clergy for a time from taking hold of his performance, lest it should receive the public sanction of the church. At last, however, the affair was brought before the synod of Glasgow, which enjoined the presbytery of Ayr to inquire whether there were sufficient grounds for a *forma clamosa* concerning Dr. M'Gill's having published certain books, containing doctrines contrary to the word of God, the confession of faith, and his ordination vows. This injunction was protested against by some of M'Gill's friends, in consequence of which the matter came before the General Assembly, which reversed the deed of synod, and merely recommended to the presbytery of Ayr to take such steps as they should find necessary for preserving the purity of doctrine, and the authority of the church's standards. The issue of the whole was M'Gill's getting off with a verbal and equivocal acknowledgment, and renewing his declaration of belief in these articles of the confession of faith, while every one knew that he had no faith in them. Dr. Erskine published an anonymous pamphlet relating to this affair, in 1789, entitled, "A Display of the Orthodoxy of Dr. M'Gill's Practical Essay, and of the Charity of his Appendix to his Revolution Sermon; in two Letters, from a Member of last General Assembly, to a Friend." This publication gives a very painful view of the state of a divided and distracted church, the members of which were formally ranked in battle array against each other, and eagerly engaged in biting and devouring one another. The business ter-

minated in very unfavourable impressions among real christians, of the conduct of the clergy on both sides. It confirmed their opinion of the heterodoxy of the one class, and led them to suspect the sincerity of the other.

In 1790, Dr. Erskine published a small work, "Letters chiefly written for comforting those bereaved of children and friends, collected from books and manuscripts." It reached a second edition in 1800. For such a work he was eminently qualified from his own extensive correspondence, and from the numerous and severe family bereavements he had himself sustained. Of nine sons he survived eight; four of whom and his second daughter died after arriving at maturity. Two very promising children, who were removed in infancy, lay dead in the house at one time; and in all these trying circumstances, though a man of strong passions, he behaved with that fortitude and resignation, amidst much emotion, which christianity alone could have inspired. The loss of his daughter he seems deeply to have deplored. Long after her death he expresses his feelings respecting her in the following beautiful passage. It occurs in the supplement to the historical collections of Dr. Gillies, which was published with some additions by Dr. Erskine, in 1796. In a short account of the Hon. Mrs. Leslie, daughter to Dr. Gillies, and wife of the Hon. David Leslie, second son of the late Earl of Leven,—he says, "when mentioning Mrs. Leslie, I hope they who know a parent's heart, will forgive me, if I gratefully record the intimate, endeared friendship betwixt her and my affectionate daughter, who was for many years my agreeable companion; and, when my knowledge of her well cultivated understanding, and delicate taste, led me to request it,

was my wise and faithful, though modest and reluctant counsellor, Margaret Erskine. Esteemed by strangers as the dear deceased was, for her good sense, extensive information, and affability and attention; and beloved as she was by her near relations: perhaps none so fully knew her worth, and so thoroughly sympathized with the bereaved parents and family in her sudden death, as Mrs. Leslie. May the friend who can never die, recompence her kindness to the living and to the dead, be her guide through all the snares and dangers of life, her support under those sorrows to which the happiest state on earth is exposed, and her abiding and everlasting portion!"

No man was more disposed than Dr. Erskine to take advantage of the death of friends to promote the benefit of the survivors. His numerous connexions and relatives afforded many opportunities of this kind; and though he seldom wrote long letters, he scarcely ever failed to comfort the bereaved, and to sympathize with the suffering. The collection he published contained nothing of his own. But we are sure it would not be difficult to procure a very extensive collection of his letters of this kind. The following short letter is given merely as a specimen of his correspondence in this way. It is addressed to the late Lord Banff, on the occasion of the death of his sister, a very amiable and exemplary christian, the wife of Alexander Murray, Esq. of Ayton, and has been kindly furnished us by her sister, the Hon. Mrs. Willison.

" My Lord:—I need not tell your lordship, how deeply your letter affected Miss Mackay, (Mrs. Erskine's sister,) and all here. What must be the distress of your tender hearted family, so

nearly related to Mrs. Murray, and who so thoroughly knew her worth, they only can conceive. Yet there is a danger of too much endeavouring to suppress, and to conceal from one another, these painful emotions. On such occasions nature must feel, and the feeling and tears of nature, religion does not forbid. At the grave of Lazarus, even Jesus wept. Yet surely sorrow for your own loss should be sweetened and softened by joy for Mrs. Murray's unspeakable gain. Short will be the separation between her and her dear friends, who walk in the steps of her faith and holiness. The day is not distant, though life should be prolonged for many years, when they shall see one another again, and their hearts rejoice, and their joy no man take from them. May this be the portion of your lordship, and of all the bereaved friends; and may he that comforts them that mourn, support you all, and especially Mr. Murray and Lady Banff, under this sore and sudden trial.

" I am your lordship's most
" obedient servant.

" E. ERSKINE."

Towards the close of Dr. Erskine's life, a secession of several ministers and other respectable persons took place from the church of Scotland, which laid the foundation of the most numerous class of independents now in that country. Their exertions in preaching the gospel through the country, their zeal, talents, property, and disinterestedness, created great alarm among the friends of the establishment. Though Dr. Erskine did not join in the unprincipled outcry which was raised against them by many of his brethren, and in a declared unanimous admonition of the General Assembly, as if they aimed at the subversion of civil government, and sought to over-

throw the established church by craft or violence, he evidently looked at their labours with considerable jealousy and suspicion. He knew the characters of the leading individuals too well to believe, what his superiors enjoined him to publish from the chair of truth, "that they were no friends to our civil constitution, and that they abused the name of liberty into a cover for secret anarchy and confusion;" but he doubted the propriety of some of the measures they employed. He published in 1801, four numbers of a publication entitled, "Religious Intelligence from abroad, and seasonable Advice concerning Lay Preaching and Exhortation." Under the head of seasonable advice, in No. I. he introduced two extracts on the subject of lay preaching, and exhorting, with an evident view to discourage these practices. How Dr. Erskine could rejoice in revivals of religion, promoted or occasioned in part by lay-preaching, in England and America, and disapprove of the use of the same means in Scotland, where they had been productive of very important effects, and where, in consequence of the destitute situation of many parts of the country, they were no less needed, we presume not to explain. A review of No. I. appeared in the *Missionary Magazine*, then publishing in Edinburgh, in which the insufficiency of the arguments against lay preaching were briefly and tenderly noticed. To this the Doctor in No. III. published a short reply, discovering more irritation and keenness, and less liberality, than the circumstances would seem to justify, or than the public were prepared to expect. In part of this reply, however, he bears an honourable, though late testimony, to the characters and motives of the Circus party, as they were then

called; and fairly gives the lie to the Assembly's admonition. "I equally disapprove such acts of controversy in some of these gentlemen's violent opposers. The arraigning the honest intentions of men, who have given strong evidence of their disinterestedness, and the charging them with disaffection to government, because some of their number have formerly blamed (perhaps unjustly, and in language not the most guarded) certain measures of administration, (so did Dr. Erskine himself, during the American war,) is not that charity which thinketh no evil, and which puts the best construction on persons, opinions, and practices, which they can naturally bear. Let us contend against what we think amiss in their acknowledged opinions, transactions, or neglects, with sound speech which cannot be condemned, and with the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God. But let us not fight against them with profane and unhallowed weapons. Let us not take up without evidence, and wantonly spread, unfavourable reports of them. Let us not ascribe to a whole party, the faults of one or of a few. And let us not employ, to suppress them, the methods of force and violence, so opposite to the genius of our holy religion. *Non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis, tempus eget.*"

This language is like himself, and like a christian. A rejoinder on the part of the editors of the *Magazine* put an end to the controversy. The habits and attachments of more than three score years, are not easily subdued; and fears for the safety of a beloved, though imperfect and confessedly corrupt system, will give a force to arguments in its support, and an edge to the temper in defending it, more cha-

racteristic of human frailty, than of christian principle.

Besides the publications already noticed, and various others of less general interest, Dr. Erskine was the author of two volumes of sermons, the one published by himself in 1798, and the other edited after his death by Sir Harry Moncrieff, and published in 1804. These volumes contain specimens of his preaching, from 1745 to 1802, when he preached a few months before his death, a sermon in defence of infant baptism, the substance of which is inserted in vol. 2.

The sermons of Dr. Erskine are distinguished not by studied elegance of language, or by the higher graces of eloquence; but by a native simplicity of style, and an energy of sentiment of far higher importance. They discover a mind mighty in the scriptures, intimately acquainted with human nature, powerfully influenced by the love of Christ, and deeply concerned that his hearers should feel the same. They contain none of those injudicious accommodations of scripture language, which tend to bring the word of God into contempt; nothing of that vain and conceited parade of learning, which only excites disgust, and no attempts to surprise by novelty of argument, or brilliancy of illustration. They are at the same time by no means trite or common-place discourses—the dullest of all the labours of the press. Rich in christian sentiment, and happy in scriptural illustration, to those who love divine truth, they will be found at once instructive, pungent, consoling, and persuasive. The sermons on the qualifications of christian teachers, ministers cautioned against giving offence, the blessing of christian teachers, and the difficulties of the pastoral office, ought to be read by every minister: while the discourses on mo-

tives and directions for hearing sermons, will be read with profit by every christian. The sermons on the mystery of godliness, and the people of God considered as all righteous, will richly repay a repeated perusal. The second volume, though posthumous, is not unworthy of its predecessor. It is mostly on practical subjects, and admirably illustrates christianity considered as a system of practical godliness. In both volumes indeed, doctrine and duty, practice and enjoyment, are happily combined together.

But the time drew near that this venerable servant of Christ must die. Though far from possessing a vigorous constitution, he enjoyed tolerable health till near his seventieth year. Symptoms of decline first appeared about May, 1792. He was attacked about that time by an acute disorder in his bowels, into which he frequently relapsed. In spring, 1793, he revived, and when he preached Dr. Robertson's funeral sermon, he took notice, that a few months before, it was more likely that Dr. Robertson should have preached after his funeral. For a month before the sudden and unexpected death of his second daughter, he laboured under illness, which continued till that time, with some intervals; but, notwithstanding the shock of that event, he was the most composed of his whole family; and for nearly two years after enjoyed tolerable health, and was little, if at all, laid aside from public duty. In the end of 1799, and beginning of 1800, he became again very ill, much enfeebled, and his family and friends much alarmed; yet he revived after all, and though laid aside for five months, resumed his public services. After this period, however, though unimpaired in spirits, his strength abated, although he preached pretty regularly from

January to December, 1801. The last Lord's-day of that year was the last time of his appearing in public. In July, 1802, he engaged Mr. Macphail, now minister of the Scots congregation at Rotterdam, as his regular assistant. During the thirteen months preceding his death, his bodily infirmities, pains, and weakness, increased much; but the powers of his mind were in no degree exhausted, and he continued to study, and to converse with his family and friends, as constantly as ever. On the third Lord's-day of 1803, he was taken very ill in the afternoon, and his illness increased all the next day; but no immediate danger was apprehended. On the morning of the succeeding Tuesday, he was in very violent pain, producing great moaning and distress. His pain, however, abated, though he remained very ill. He was persuaded to lie down a little in the evening on his bed, a very unusual practice with him; and when he rose, he continued, with close attention, studying a theological work, in the Dutch language, during most of the night. His sight, which was always uncommonly good, (his eye literally never "waxing dim," never requiring the aid of spectacles, in reading even the smallest type,) evidently grew more indistinct. This, he supposed, was owing to the imperfect light of the candles by which he read, very frequently desiring his son, who sat by him, to snuff them. His family, though not at all apprehensive of any immediate danger, earnestly pressed him to permit one of them to sit by him during the night; but he resisted all their intreaties with the utmost tenacity, being ever most unwilling to give trouble, as he thought it, even to those who, so far from feeling any in watching him, would have been much gratified by it. His youngest daughter,

however, waited at the outside of his chamber door, and a servant also in the room below, both listening to the complaints which he could not forbear uttering. On hearing his groans interrupted, they went into his apartment, when they found that he had been out of bed, and was attempting to return, and had partly got into bed again, when he had expired. Medical assistance was quickly procured, but no symptom of animation remained. He died January the 19th, 1803, in the eighty-second year of his age, exhausted by pain, infirmity, and age, and worn out by incessant labour, and no doubt by many and severe afflictions; under which, though far remote from stoical insensibility, he was always greatly too reserved and silent. So little did he apprehend his own dissolution to be near, that late on the very evening of his death, he desired his son to bid for some books at an auction, and told his housekeeper to let him have an egg for breakfast next day.

From the preceding sketch, imperfect as it undoubtedly is, it must appear, that Dr. Erskine was an enlightened, a consistent, and a decided christian. He early felt the power of the gospel, he long adorned its profession, and died, there is reason to believe, in the full enjoyment of its hopes. He was eminently useful by his preaching, his example, and his influence. He was the public friend of the gospel; rejoiced in its dissemination, and actively supported those whose labours and exertions he approved. He was the first person in Scotland, who brought the writings of Jonathan Edwards into public notice. The same may be said respecting the writings of Andrew Fuller: he first procured them himself, and, by his recommendation, introduced them to others. When Fuller paid his

first visit to Scotland with Mr. Sutcliff, they were received by none with greater cordiality. He highly appreciated their object, to which he was an early subscriber. He invited them to meet Sir Harry Moncrieff, Dr. Campbell, Doctors Davidson, Dickson, Fleming, and others of his friends, at his house. He patronized their cause as far as he properly could, and lamented to Mr. Fuller, that by the illiberal and unchristian conduct of the General Assembly, he was precluded from inviting him to his pulpit. In thirst for information respecting the kingdom of Christ, in disinterested zeal for its extension in the world, and in genuine candour and liberality toward those who differed from him, he has left few individuals in the church to which he belonged to fill up his place.

Dr. Erskine possessed talents, both natural and acquired, considerably above most of his contemporaries, though he never employed them for the purpose of display. His learning was extensive, various, and solid, devoted to the noblest purposes, and combined with unaffected humility and simplicity of manners. He was a modest and unassuming, but by no means a bashful man. As a public speaker he was too little attentive to those external recommendations, which give the great charm to many preachers. His pronunciation was uncommonly broad, and his gestures and action awkward and inelegant. As a christian, and a man of honour, he was true to his principles, and decided in his attachments. He could act in difficult circumstances a very determined part; and could show to both his friends and his adversaries, that he would neither be flattered into compliance, nor frightened into submission. As a public character, and minister of the gospel, he had few equals, and no superior;

CONG. MAG. No. 11.

the man of God appeared in all he did and said. At the bed of the sick, and the dying, when bending over the couch of poverty and disease, he shone with peculiar lustre. Alive to all that afflicted humanity, and acquainted with all that could comfort the mourner, and cheer the dying, he there poured from the fulness of his heart the treasures of heavenly consolation.

His character is thus described by Dr. Davidson, one of his oldest and most intimate friends, in a sermon preached to his congregation, the second Lord's-day after his death. "Though Dr. Erskine sought not fame, and even shrank from it, yet his uniform character, his public professional labours, his disinterested and active benevolence, and his few, though important, publications, gained him such estimation in the minds of good men, both at home and abroad, as falls to the lot of but a small number of the human race. As a scholar, as a gentleman, as a friend, as a philanthropist, as a christian, as a pastor, who can be mentioned as excelling Dr. Erskine? In rejoicing with those who rejoiced, in weeping with those who wept, in enlivening and enlightening his friends with his cheerful and interesting conversation, and in speaking a word in season to the afflicted christian, he was surpassed by none. Who was weak, and he was not weak? Who was offended, and he did not burn? In his character were concentrated extensive learning, fervent piety, purity of doctrine, energy of sentiment, enlarged benevolence, uniformly animated by an ardent zeal for the glory of his Master, and for the salvation of men. In a good cause he was inflexible; in friendship invariable; in discharging the duties of his function indefatigable. In his public ministrations he was indeed a

"workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

Thus lived and died Dr. John Erskine; to whom, taking his character altogether, the description of Cowper was, perhaps, as applicable, as to any individual, who ever held the office of the christian ministry.

"A veteran warrior in the christian field,
Who never saw the sword he could not wield ;
Grave without dullness, learned without pride,
Exact, yet not precise, though meek, keen-eyed;
A man that would have fol'd, at their own

play,
A dozen would be's of the present day ;
Who, when occasion justified its use,
Had wit as bright, as ready to produce ;
Could fetch from records of an earlier age,
Or from philosophy's enlightened page,
His rich materials, and regale your ear
With strains it was a privilege to hear :
Yet above all, his luxury supreme,
And his chief glory, was the gospel theme ;
There he was copious as old Greece and Rome,
His happy eloquence seem'd there at home ;
Ambitions not to shine, or to excel,
But to treat justly what he lov'd so well."

Besides private informations, letters, and the published works of Dr. Erskine, the wri-

ter of this memoir has been occasionally indebted to the account of the life and writings of Dr. Erskine, lately published by Sir Harry Moncrieff; to which he begs leave to refer those who would wish for further information respecting the literary and ecclesiastical connexions of the Doctor, and the events of his time. While he cheerfully acknowledges the talent and candour displayed in that work, he cannot conceal his astonishment at the statements and reasonings of various parts, especially of the appendix; nor can he refrain from expressing his regrets in common with almost every christian reader of the work, that it contains so little respecting the experimental and practical piety of its subject; and that no attempt has been made after the delay of fifteen years to obtain or to publish almost any part of his correspondence, which must have been equally extensive and interesting.

SHORT DISCOURSES FOR FAMILIES, &c.

NO. XI.—AN INCENTIVE TO IMPROVE THE PRESENT TIME TO SPIRITUAL EDIFICATION, FROM A VIEW OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THOSE WHOSE MEANS OF GRACE ARE TERMINATED.

The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.
Jeremiah viii. 20.

JEREMIAH has been denominated the weeping prophet; and who, under the influence of just views of the divine character, could have refrained from weeping over those awful crimes committed by the Jewish people; or who with patriotic principles, and an affectionate heart, could forbear to weep in prospect of those tremendous judgments which God had de-

nounced against his once favoured people? Our concern, however, is principally with the application of the text to our own circumstances.

In condescension to the feeble state of the human understanding, God has revealed many of the sublimest truths of religion through the medium of objects that are almost daily passing under our notice. Hence, in the words of the prophet, he invites our attention to the interesting season of harvest, to show us the worth of those privileges which we now possess. The harvest, in the extended sense of the prophet, must be considered to include not only the ingathering of the produce, but also the seed time, and the intervening season of vegetation. The husbandman, by much labour

and expense, prepares his ground to receive the seed: when the soil is thus prepared, he seeks good seed, and casts it into the earth. This is a season of great toil and considerable anxiety. When the precious grain is deposited in the earth, he waits the descent of fructifying showers, and then begins to clear away every noxious weed, lest the growth of the corn should be impeded. He beholds with delight the appearance of "the blade, then the ear, and afterward the full corn in the ear;" but his anxieties do not entirely subside till it is gathered into the store-house. While it continues to stand in the field, he still fears lest the storms of wind and rain should descend upon it, and greatly diminish the value of the crop. At last, by the blessing of God, the produce of the ground is brought in fully ripe, and the happy husbandman literally verifies the declaration of scripture, that he who at one season goeth forth with a heavy heart, under a gloomy sky, bearing precious seed, "shall come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

Such is the harvest, and such the toils and cares connected with it. But the harvest intended in my text is *the season of gospel grace*. To us God has given a spiritual harvest time, and our improvement of the season is of infinite importance. The seed, we are told by him whose instructions are infallible, "is the word of God." Its divine truths, which are generally delivered in a few laconic sentences, sink deep into the heart; and, like the precious grains of wheat, though small, and apparently inconsiderable, are calculated, under genial influences, to bear much fruit. As the seed is cast into the ground by the husbandman, so by the ministers of Christ the word of divine truth is scattered among

the hearers. It falls upon one heart, but this is a way-side hearer: he understands not the word of God, and the wicked one cometh "and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart;" It lights upon another heart, but this is a stony place, and the seed has not much depth of earth; "he heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it, yet he hath not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." While the minister dispenses the word of God, the heavenly seed descends upon another heart, which is perhaps by nature a luxuriant soil, but that soil produces thorns or thistles, and their growth is rapid, the good seed therefore is choked; "the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and *this man also* becometh unfruitful." Is all the heavenly seed then unproductive? Is every soil unfruitful? Nay, saith Jehovah, "my word shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish the thing whereunto I have appointed it." "Other" we are told "fell on good ground, and brought forth fruit;" this "is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it, which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth some an hundred fold, some sixty fold, some thirty fold."

Ever since the curse, the earth in its natural state has been nearly barren, but when it is to be cultivated, the husbandman drives his plough over it, turns up the surface, and cuts there many deep furrows. So when a heart is taken under the culture of the Holy Ghost, he frequently plows up and harrows over that heart with severe troubles, and then gives to one of his ministers a particular portion of the good seed to scatter over it. The seed thus dispensed, falls into those furrows in the

heart, which have been cut by affliction, and in a little time the influences of the Holy Spirit descend upon that heart like rain upon the newly sown field, and the good seed begins to vegetate. The farmer rejoices in a good seed time, as it affords a hope of future plenty; and so rejoices the minister of the gospel, when many flock to hear the word, especially if his own soul seem inspired with new vigour to dispense it. But when the wheat is cast into the ground, it does not immediately spring up, neither is that desirable; its speedy appearance would be a sad proof that it had not much depth of earth. It first vegetates downwards, and takes deep root, then it presents the blade as an earnest of the future crop. Thus when the word of God is sown in the heart, if it immediately produce a noisy profession of love to God, and loud declamation in praise of the minister, there is great reason to fear that it has not much depth of earth. But if it produce conviction of sin, pungent grief, humiliation before God, and fervent prayer in secret for his blessing, this is taking deep root in the heart, and the effects will be seen in a consistent profession.

It should not be forgotten, that a season of in-gathering will eventually come. When the genial influence of the sun has matured the growth of the corn, the sickle is put in, and the harvest is brought home with rejoicing. Thus also at the season appointed, when the good seed in the heart has yielded its fruit in maturity, God commissions the angel of death to put in his sickle and reap, that another shock of corn, fully ripe, may be brought into the heavenly granary.

This thought leads me to notice the summer as another season, spoken of in the text. As by the harvest we understand the *season of gospel grace*, so by the summer

we consider the *term of human life* to be intended. When the cheering showers of rain descend upon the earth, accompanied by the rays of the summer sun, a grand process is carried on in the vegetable world. Thus also there are seasons in the experience of the christian, when the word of God in the heart is watered with a copious shower from heaven, and its growth becomes very rapid. "I will be as the dew unto Israel," said Jehovah; and when the influences of the Holy Spirit descend copiously upon the heart that is under his culture, as the dew in the night season used to descend upon the land of Palestine, it is with us a season of eminent fruitfulness.

Summer, as contrasted against winter, embraces the genial part of spring, and the early part of autumn; so the summer of human life must generally be estimated between the thoughtlessness of childhood, and the debility of extreme old age. In childhood, reason is very imperfect, and, therefore, cannot apprehend many of the glorious peculiarities of the gospel, and the attention of the mind is so much arrested by the novel scenes of life, that subjects of a spiritual nature are treated with neglect. When on the other hand we turn to contemplate extreme old age, nothing presents itself but the remnant of faculties once vigorous, now enfeebled, and thus incapacitated to attend to those subjects which implicate the final destiny of the soul. The summer of human life, therefore, is to be calculated between childhood and old age, and this is the time for producing a harvest of spiritual fruit unto the glory of God.

But it is worthy of remark, that the harvest may be past before the summer is quite ended. In the natural world, if the great

Disposer of the seasons give fair weather at the time of gathering in the fruits of the earth, its produce may be deposited in the barn long before the summer terminates, and the gloom or frost of winter appears. But even then a cheerless prospect opens upon the man who has neglected to till his ground; the winter will inevitably arrive, and he who has made no provision against it, must beg or perish. Thus also the day of grace terminates before the close of human life; God, in righteous indignation, gives up the hardened sinner to final impenitence. He has had line upon line, and precept upon precept, to teach him the will of God; unto him the good news of salvation have been faithfully declared, but his obdurate heart has refused to submit to Christ; God, therefore, has righteously pronounced upon his case, "My Spirit shall not always strive with that wicked man; let him alone; conscience cease to reprove him; my Holy Spirit cease to warn him; I give him up to a reprobate mind." His conscience then becomes seared till it is callous, and being past feeling, the unhappy creature is given up to work iniquity, until the righteous vengeance of God descends upon him, and he sinks into perdition.

While the harvest is not gathered in, those who can do nothing better may glean, to make some provision for the winter. It is, indeed, but a poor resort, yet it is better than allowing every means of support to escape, and being in consequence left totally destitute. And while the gospel is proclaimed, and the conscience is not quite seared, there is hope that the sinner may yet be preserved from perishing eternally. But when even the gleaning time of God's harvest has passed by unimproved, the sinner must inevitably perish under the bleak

storms of divine indignation. There is, indeed, cause for bitter reflection to those who are rescued from destruction in the last stage of their lives, that their best days have been expended in the service of Satan; but if the mercy of God interpose at this late period, and save them from eternal misery, it is still a cause for unspeakable thankfulness,—they are as brands plucked out of the burning. It is, however, a solemn reflection, that instances of conversion to God in old age are very few, and in the whole New Testament history, we have no account of the conversion of an old man or woman.

When both harvest and summer are past, the sluggard's hopes for the winter are entirely blasted. Even the gleanings of the field are then denied him. The time approaches, when, like the prodigal son in the parable, he would gladly satisfy the cravings of appetite with husks appropriated to the swine; but even that will not be granted. The harvest and summer being both gone by, without any provision, he must perish without remedy. And thus, when the life of the sinner closes, both harvest time and the season of summer are with him absolutely gone. The sinner's hopes are then brought to an awful termination. Formerly he procrastinated both repentance and reformation. "A future day—a future day shall see me a reformed man," was the continual language of his heart; but, alas, all the future days, like their predecessors, found him indisposed to prepare for the hour of death; and now the last day of his life is arrived, he exclaims in the impassioned language of my text, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved."

The captious critic would say, the prophet was not a man of refined taste: he has not preserved

his figure entire. But I am persuaded, that the judicious christian who possesses real delicacy of taste, will perceive, in the change of phraseology, a peculiar degree of beauty. The prophet exclaims, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended :" and there he is so deeply affected with the importance of the subject, and the awful consequences it involves, that he drops the figure, and concludes in terms which none can misapprehend,—" and we are not saved."

The sinner is not saved from the influence of his sins, and therefore he seeks to gratify the lusts of the flesh, and of the mind, at any expense. Objects of time and sense are the idols of his heart; eternity appears distant; and he determines to enjoy the present life in his own way, so long as that is possible; and when he can indulge his carnal inclinations no longer, he will talk about preparing for an eternal state. Behold him, then, brought down to the closing scene of life: he loves the world as ardently as at any former period, and if the energies of nature did not sink under the pressure of disease, the ways of sin would still be his delight. Now, indeed, he is compelled to abstract himself from the occupations and cares of the world; but is he therefore in a suitable frame of mind to prepare for death and eternity. Alas, he finds his soul has been deluded by a lie. He cannot prepare,—the preparation of the heart is the work of God, but God is withdrawn from him for ever. He cannot even pray. Formerly he might have prayed, and answers of peace might have been returned; but now he finds, to his unutterable confusion, that there remaineth for him "only a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation." He remembers with deep distress the long season of grace

with which he has been indulged, and he recounts the mercies of his life as so many aggravations of his guilt. He finds them all terminating in an awful gloom, and, though he still passionately loves his sins, and would, if he were able, still indulge the propensities of his heart, he deplores their consequences; and in an agony which all the powers of language cannot fully describe, he exclaims, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved."

Sinners tremble at the idea of a devil; but if they be not saved from the influence and guilt of their sins, devils must be their companions. The ungodly seem, almost by universal consent, to strive to obliterate from their minds the solemn truth that their "adversary the devil walketh about, as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." Hence some dispute his existence; others think he is not quite so bad as a few enthusiastic people represent him, and therefore with themselves will be saved at last. And throughout the circles of polite life, it is an almost unpardonable rudeness even to mention his name under any other than a ludicrous or profane association. In the pulpit, which must be allowed of all places most suitable for such discussion, the mention of a being so odious, as having a real existence, will infallibly procure for the man who is hardy enough to make the experiment, the unqualified epithet of a *vulgar enthusiast*. But follow from the gay circles of life to the chamber of sickness, one of these dupes of fashion, whose religious and moral opinions, like their sentiments on every other subject, are formed upon the model of any prevailing taste; and in what circumstances do you find this gay, and, perhaps, speaking after the manner of men, I may say, this amiable, creature! The

mind is enveloped in an awful gloom; its prospects of earthly enjoyments are terminated. It has nothing pleasing to anticipate. Its past career will not bear reflection; and yet it cannot cease to think. In these circumstances, the long exploded and unfashionable notion of a devil and his angels can no longer be resisted. The wretched creature reclines upon the pillow, awaiting with awful apprehensions the approach of death; and the poor deluded soul, then partially undeceived, exclaims, "Wo is me, for I am undone;" "the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved."

Death has justly been described as *the king of terrors*. He closes the eyes of man upon all the beauties of this lower world, and absolutely terminates his correspondence with all the objects of the present life. He shuts up all the senses; and these are at present almost the only avenues of information to the mind. He lays the body in the grave, and leaves it there to become the subject of corruption. He drives the soul to the confines of the eternal state, and there he leaves her to be conducted into the presence of her Maker. Can any thing, then, fortify the mind against the terrors of this formidable enemy? Faith, and that alone, can triumph over the horror common to humanity, on the approach of the hideous foe. Faith penetrates the eternal world, and recognizes in God an unchangeable friend. Faith receives the promise of eternal life, as procured by the death of Christ, ratified by the oath of God, and already partially fulfilled by the presence of the Saviour in the kingdom of heaven, as the representative of all his people. But the unbelieving sinner is destitute of these divine supports. To him, therefore, death appears under all his

terrific forms. On the verge of the eternal world, we hear the sinner exclaiming, "The day of grace is past; the term of my mortal life is ending, and oh, wretched creature, I am not saved."

But what renders his feelings so acute? Death is the common lot of mankind, and he always said he should do as well as his neighbours. The acuteness of his feelings arises from his belief in the immortality of his soul. He now shudders at the idea of eternal misery; and, alas, he feels a strong presentiment that it will be his portion. He reflects upon the incalculable duration of eternity. He contemplates the exquisite nature of eternal misery. He thinks of the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, prepared for the devil and his angels. He looks forward to the day of final judgment; anticipates the decision of the judge; and ponders over that distracting sentence, "Depart, ye cursed." The near prospect of such consummate misery is, he finds, too overpowering to be calmly endured. He can bear it no longer. In an agony, in some degree characteristic of the torments of hell, he begins his lamentations: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved" "from the wrath to come."

Youth are here presented with a warning that merits their serious attention. With you, my dear young friends, the present is the summer season of life,—improve it with diligence. The early part of the summer of life in your experience may be a season of fair weather; and all nature around you may appear with a smiling aspect. Let these favourable circumstances induce you to attend without an hour's procrastination to the cultivation of your hearts. The summer, which, in its early stages, appears to promise much

fair weather, may, at its close, bring heavy clouds and dreadful storms. Say not, "I am young; life must be enjoyed, and afterwards I will prepare for death." Your harvest time may soon be past; and while you flatter yourselves that it is scarcely begun, your life may be brought to an end. The young, perhaps, will say, Are we, then, to enjoy none of the felicities which health, youth, and vigour, put in our possession? Are we to relinquish all the pleasures of this life, under the hope of enjoying pleasures of a superior order in the future state? Surely, my young friends, if this surrender of present enjoyments were required by God, it would not appear an unreasonable sacrifice; for the term of human life, when contrasted with eternity, appears but as a speck in immensity. But no such sacrifice is demanded. If the testimony may be taken of one, who, having tasted of the cup of youthful pleasures, as mingled with the gaieties of life, has since drank of it as mingled with religious cordials, it is in the latter state incomparably preferable to the former. Religion forbids none but unholy pleasures, and those, how delicious soever to the palate, soon begin to operate as poison in the system.

Some probably are disposed to reply, What then is the amount of that religious conformity you would exact of us? I reply, make prayer the serious and daily business of your lives; "in every thing by prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known unto God." This is making him your friend and confidant. In passing through life, trouble of various kinds is your inevitable lot, and under the various afflictions incident to human life, nothing will prove a solace equal to a habit of secret prayer. Be in-treated also to "remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy."

God will honour those who honour him. Be not contented, my dear young friends with appearing in the house of God, once on the sabbath, but consecrate all the hours of the day to the service of your Creator: manifest by your diligent and regular attendance in the sanctuary, that the blessing of Jehovah is to you an object of supreme desire. Again I add, that duty requires you to separate yourselves from all company that is either profane or lascivious, and in every company to prove, by the purity of your conversation, that you desire to walk worthy of your high vocation as christians.

But youth are not the only persons implicated. Men of business are deeply concerned in the solemn admonition. Their particular occupations require diligent attention. The claims of a family are imperious, and present exertions may ensure future repose. But these reasons for diligence in business, which are in themselves cogent, are often converted into specious pretexts to qualify and excuse the love of the world. This baneful principle is thus presented under false colours, and being viewed through a disordered medium, conscience begins to be satisfied, that the governing principle of the mind is something distinct from what the apostle intended, when he wrote that solemn declaration, "if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Diligence in business, attention to the cares of a family, and provident regard to the winter of life, are enjoined no less by christianity, than by common sense. But it is on the excess of this prudential attention to the things of time, that the fatal error is chargeable.

Unto the aged, I turn most affectionately to inquire of what description their harvest has been.

My aged friends, the summer with you will soon end, and you must then "give an account of the deeds done in the body, and every one receive according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." The eternal God will require an account of your stewardship; and the produce of your harvest must then be stated. If it should then appear, that the harvest time of divine grace was suffered to pass by unimproved, you cannot be saved. But if it then appear, that the word of God took deep root in your hearts, sprang up and bear fruit, you will enter heaven rejoicing, carrying your sheaves with you. Remember, I beseech you, this solemn truth, "ye cannot serve God and mammon." If then but one of the two harvests can be successfully made, during the summer of human life, it is incomparably better to forego a large part of the harvest of this world rather than even a small part of that harvest which is spiritual, and which, how meanly soever estimated on earth, will be found

of infinite value the instant you enter the eternal state. The man may be happy, in the highest sense of the word, who, on his death-bed, reviewing his course through life, can say, "the harvest of the world to me is past, and I was able to gather in very little of its produce; but I have an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away." But that man cannot be happy, who is constrained at the close of life to say, "the harvest of the world is past, and I gathered much, but now I am about to leave it; the harvest of gospel grace also is past, and that I have neglected to use; therefore 'the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved.'" The one sowed to the flesh, and of the flesh reaped corruption; the other sowed to the spirit, and of the spirit reaps life everlasting. May you, my dear friends, be wise unto salvation, that when the harvest with you is past, and the summer is ended, you may be found in Christ saved from the wrath to come.

ORIGINAL ESSAYS, COMMUNICATIONS, &c.

BARTHOLOMEW DAY.

To the Editors.

I CONCLUDE from your note upon the letter of FABIUS, in the number for August, that the commemoration of Bartholomew day by dissenters, would be as agreeable to you as it appears to him. On this supposition, I venture to inform you, in my plain way, how we are in the habit of keeping that anniversary in our family; and although we are country folks, perhaps our plan may furnish some useful hints to town folks: at least, it will prove that we remember the days of old, and the years of former generations.

I must, however, inform you at the outset, that I write un-

CONG. MAG. No. 11.

known to our wife; not, indeed, because she feels no interest in this day; so far is this from being the case, that she is the inventor of our plan, and its chief promoter among the children and servants; but because she having more taste and refinement than I, and being a better *scribe*, would not approve of my plain words, and *provincialisms*,—I think she calls them. When she applies this long word to any of my low words, I return for answer, that as I meddle with nothing beyond my own *province*, *provincialisms* are the very *isms* I ought to use. You must know, also, that she is herself the direct descendant of an ejected minister, and that his

old chapel (she calls it *the meeting*) is within a stone's-throw of our cottage; indeed it stands on our grounds. Oh, Sir, it would make your heart sore, to hear how she talks of old times, when she leads any of our visitors to the vestry-window, out at which her dear ancestor escaped from the party who came to apprehend him. But even that, she says, is nothing to *the glory* which has departed, or rather been driven out at the door since by Socinianism. The Stuarts (I quote her own words) only plucked the candles out of the candlesticks, but the Socinians have placed false lights in the old sockets. You will understand from this, that the old chapel has new tenants, with new tenets, which we, of "the good old way," neither approve nor approach. *Our wife*, who is fond of pointed remarks (*clenchers*, as I call them) on this subject, was mightily pleased with one in your Magazine. Speaking of her ancestors, who built and endowed the chapel, she says now, "they never suspected that Socinianism, with cuckoo-insidiousness, would take possession of nests it never built, and hatch its brood in stolen habitations." This is very well said; but little Mary Anne, (she is the child of our old age,) mistaking the meaning of the long *compound*, as our wife calls the phrase "cuckoo-insidiousness," told us, the other day, that she had found a *Socinian's nest* in the orchard hedge. "Ah," said her mother, sighing as she spoke, "I wish that were the *only* one upon the farm." But I must come to the point; as *our wife* says, when I digress; which I am very apt to do.

Bartholomew day, like the anniversary of the passover in a Hebrew family, is "much remembered before the Lord" in our family. Indeed we contrive to make it a kind of Sabbath, by

getting every thing *sided* (as we say in this county) for the occasion. Accordingly, we begin the day by reading the seventh chapter of Daniel: and it is so well understood among us, that he is the *representative* of the Bartholomew men for the time, that the *family tree*, like the poplar before the window, waves and sparkles in all its branches, as I exclaim, with unusual energy, *then said these men, we shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him, concerning the law of his God.* Our wife says, when I read this in my *best* manner, which I do in *August*, because then my asthma is not ticklish; that it sounds to her like a prophetic voice predicting the decision of posterity, in regard to the nonconformists; and adds, "the confession extorted from *these men*, and whispered in the palace of Babylon, will one day peal spontaneously from the lips of a regenerated world." Now, Sir, we are all learned enough, and nonconformists enough, to *relish* such remarks: they really light up every face in the family with new expression. At such times, (and you must pardon a fond husband and parent for saying so,) I am tempted to wish the painter in our market town present, that he might embody the animated expression which beams and breathes on every countenance; for we are able to afford a family picture, being well to do in the world; and I should have had one ere now, but for our wife. She evades the proposal by saying, that, like the Vicar of Wakefield, we have no door sufficient to admit one of dimensions requisite to embrace us all. Now all this is said so good humouredly on her part, that I seem, for the time, to forget what is certainly her *secret* objection; she does not think us *handsome* enough to produce *ef-*

feet. I allow that we are not remarkably handsome, (she and the girls excepted,) but upon Bartholomew day, when our best clothes are on, and our best feelings in exercise; what between the ruddy health of the lads, and the neatness of our girls, and the matronly look of their mother; I am sure, if well grouped, we should be passable. And as we have a likeness of our wife's ejected ancestor over the mantle piece, I often ask, would not he set us off to advantage, if tastily introduced? But even this, fond as she is of *him*, fails to coax her into compliance; which is the more remarkable, since, on every other subject, we really anticipate each other's wishes; or if any thing put her out of the way at any time, I have only to say, "your ejected ancestor would not have looked cross." On hearing this, she glances at his calm brow, and meek eye, and in a moment resumes her wonted sweetness. But I am digressing again.

Well, having finished our chapter, we unite on that day in singing,

"These glorious minds how bright they shine,
"Whence all their white array" &c.

for we are still old fashioned enough to make *praise* a stated part of family worship; even although some of our religious neighbours, who can sing better than we do, have given it up at home, unless when they have *evening parties* of the young folks; then it is fashionable, and "hymns and spiritual songs" take the place of national and love songs, and are said to be *excellent amusement*. We, however, have our doubts on this head, and they are so strong, that we never use *sacred hymns* but for *sacred purposes*. And yet we are not for denying amusement to young folks, nor to old ones neither, in its proper time. Indeed, we encourage our girls and boys to

join in a good national song of an evening when they are at home, and weary of reading. We even *modernize* a little in our social worship; and although the old harpsichord is not used as an accompaniment during singing, (because the girls employ it for our amusement at other times,) we go so far as to place an *aeolian harp* in a remote window, and while its thrilling tones, softened by the distance, and varied in their passage through the windings of the old house, mingle at intervals with our voices, we almost mistake them for whispers of "*the song of Moses and the Lamb*." On the morning of the last anniversary, they chimed in so harmoniously, and with such effect, that the instrument seemed fanned into music by the rushing wings of the Bartholomew witnesses. I ought, however, in justice to *our wife*, to state that she made this remark the year before; and this year I made the same just in time to be before-hand with little Mary Anne; for I observed that the harp had brought it into her memory, and that she was watching for a fair opportunity to repeat it. But you shall hear more of her by and by.

After singing, we close this solemnity by prayer, and thanksgiving; and if *enlargement* of heart be any token for good, our petitions on behalf of our revered and beloved *monarch*, are not unheard. The "amen, and amen!" added to *them*, has all the sincerity and sympathy which it breathes when our children pour out their hearts in behalf of us. Indeed, we always think and speak of our good old king, as of an aged and endeared parent; and feel so towards him, that we could not help blessing him in our prayers, even if it were not a binding duty. And our minister sets us such an example of this, that it would be difficult for any

one to feel otherwise, were any one so heartless as to try.

Under the influence of such feelings and recollections, we set down to breakfast; and although calmness and cheerfulness are settled on every face as the prevailing emotions of the day; it is yet obvious, that each is thinking of the gloom and sadness which prevailed at the breakfast tables of the Bartholomew men on that fatal morning when they forsook all to follow Christ. We exchange looks, which say, in no tame language, "the lines have fallen to us in pleasant places, and peaceful times!" Our own enjoyment, thus, makes us sensible of the immense sacrifice made by our FATHERS on this day. I do not know what our wife may say should she happen to read the following little anecdote of herself; but as she will be much occupied next month, she may not have time to read your number; and, therefore, I will venture for once. You must know then, that she and the girls use coffee for breakfast;—the lads and I join them in a cup, but not until we have had a *grounding* of old English harvest fare. Well, while I was slicing the *substantial*, she seemed all at once to have forgotten that her cup was in her hand: she looked first at me, and then at each of the children, and then at her ejected ancestor's picture, and then at us all again; and by this time, her hand was trembling, and the tears filling her eyes, she exclaimed, involuntarily, "*It would have failed!*" What would have failed, love? said I. The question broke her trance, and, after recovering from the confusion it occasioned, she said, "I was trying in idea to go through the effort of the Bartholomew men, by a similar sacrifice of character and property:—to realize their struggle in parting from their families, and

exposing them to want; but, alas, my faith would fail me. And yet (pointing to the picture) such was *his family*, even as *our's*, on the fatal morning when he '*took cheerfully the spoiling of his goods.*' From the strength of his character, I learn the weakness of my own." I just mention this little circumstance to show that we keep the day, not for indulging party feelings, but for the simple purpose of improving our own hearts in gratitude and humility, while comparing them with "holy men of old." I mentioned this to the children at the time; but Mary Anne, who often puzzles us all by her questions, asked, "Was St. Bartholomew a good man?" I know of nothing to the contrary, said I, but his *day* has been a *bad* one for other saints. "Well, he could not help that, since he was dead—why not, then, remember him too to-day?" "Mary Anne," said her mother, "the difference between us and the Catholics lies here,—*they* keep such days by praying to their saints;—we keep this day merely by praying to God in the name of Jesus, that we may be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." After this explanation we proceeded to chapel; for our minister makes a point of preaching on Bartholomew day, and on those occasions, we think him eloquent, indeed. Well, it so happened that he took for his text this time, our favourite verse, Daniel vi. 5. "Then said these men," &c. Only think, Mr. Editor, how we all *looked* then! We did not think of our *looks* at the time, and it is well we did not; for I should have thought *next* of the painter, and the long-wished-for family picture. Indeed, had he been at meeting that morning, (and he is a nonconformist,) we should have been a *temptation* to him; for certainly when the text was read, *our wife* looked for all the world,

as if both the mantle and spirit of her ejected ancestor had dropt upon her for the first time. I hope it was not *wrong* in me to observe this when and where I did, since I cannot charge myself with looking towards her on purpose, nor with any view to the picture. And I must say, that had she suspected any thing of the kind, she would not have returned the look on any account in the chapel; for it is only justice to remark, that if, like Isaiah's seraphim in the temple, she had "six wings," the prophet of our temple would have to say, "*with twain she covered her face.*" But to return.

—On that day our minister examined one by one all the political, heretical, and puritanical charges brought against the fathers and founders of nonconformity; proving that they had neither been regicides, republicans, nor schismatics, but *Daniels*, against whom no occasion could be found, except "concerning the matter of their God." But, dear me, how I do run on. I intended to have given you the history of the manner in which we spend the whole day, along with specimens of our evening *catechising*; but my paper is too full already, and I digress so, that you will think me garrulous, if not foolish. But I should like of all things to write again, because we have been striving for forty years to keep up nonconformity in its old character; and as we have found it very useful in the family, a fuller account might be useful to others. If you think so, you have only to give me a hint; for now that our harvest is over, and the candle-light evenings begun, I have plenty of time.

Yours, in love,

Puritan Farm. Non. Con.

P. S. I have just read part of this letter to our oldest son, and he objects to the phrase, "*our wife*," as being too familiar. "It

is my way, John," said I, "and if familiarity be wrong, why then all the letter is wrong. Were it an essay upon Bartholomew day, of course I should have mentioned none of you; but it is a *letter*, and, according to your *mother*, that ought to be a *picture* of the place and persons it comes from: something which will make the reader see and feel as if he had been our *visitor* at the time. This you know is her definition, '*a letter ought to be a picture.*' There are *more* things ought to be a *picture*; but let that drop." Thus I answered him;—and should you start an objection to which this is not an answer, you are at liberty to alter the phrase unto "*my wife.*"

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ON THE WATCHERS AND HOLY ONES, MENTIONED IN THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

To the Editors.

I WAS much surprised on reading a paper in your last number, on "the Guardianship of Angels," to find a reference to the term *watchers*, in the 4th chapter of Daniel, as denoting angels, or created beings, who are appointed to watch over us. I should have supposed that no man who attended to the office assigned to these *watchers* and *holy ones* could for a moment have imagined them to be angels, or, indeed, any created beings, of whatever order. It is theirs to "*decree*" the judgment which dooms the haughty Nebuchadnezzar to a sudden and melancholy reverse of fortune, as well as to see it executed. Now such a decree could issue only from the councils of heaven; by which I mean the councils, not of God and his angels, (for who will dare to associate angels with God, in his resolutions and decrees?) but of the three adorable persons in the Trinity. These are the beings, therefore, to whom this text must allude, and whose constant in-

spection over the affairs of men challenge for them the title of *watchers*, as the other appellation of *holy ones* is demanded by the absolute sanctity of their natures. I am happy to be able, in support of this assertion, to adduce the authority of no less a man than Bishop Horsley, whose discourse on the passage in question, for the masterly train of reasoning it discloses, and for the light it throws upon the subject of angelic guardianship in general, is worthy the attention of every student in divinity. Yours, &c.

A CONSTANT READER.

ON THE DEACON'S OFFICE.

The term *deacon* signifies, in general, a servant, or minister, of any description; and in this general acceptation it is applied to Christ, to the apostles, and to the ordinary preachers of the gospel; but it is especially appropriated to denote those who are called to superintend the temporal concerns of the church.

In the Acts of the Apostles, chapter vi. verses 1—7, we are furnished with an interesting account of the original institution of the deacon's office, which affords much useful information relative to the nature and utility of such an office in the church. It appears that originally the entire management of the affairs of the infant church was vested in the apostles; and so long as the disciples were few in number, they discharged their various duties without much inconvenience; but when the multitude greatly increased, the superintendence of the secular concerns would necessarily occupy a considerable portion of time, and it was found necessary to appoint special persons to regulate these matters, in order to relieve the apostles, and to give them more time to attend to spiritual instruction and edification.

As in every church there must

be many things of a secular nature which require attention, so it appears highly desirable, if not absolutely necessary, that suitable persons should be appointed to regulate such concerns, and to attend to the several duties comprehended in the expression, "to serve tables," viz. to manage all pecuniary affairs; to receive the voluntary contributions of the church and congregation; to provide a liberal maintenance for him who labours in word and doctrine; to distribute the alms of the church to its poor members; to keep the house of God in good repair, and procure all that is necessary for the regular and decent administration of the word and ordinances; and, by the exercise of their various gifts, to aim at the promotion of the peace, the purity, and the increase of the church.

While the appropriate duties of deacons refer to the temporal concerns of the church, they may also, by the exercise of their various spiritual gifts, materially assist the minister, by taking the lead in social meetings, conversing with candidates for communion with the church, and visiting the sick and dying, in order to communicate spiritual advice and consolation. These duties, however, do not appear to belong essentially to the office: neither, as deacons, are they called to preach the word; but as those who are chosen to fill this office, will in general be selected, on account of the eminence of their gifts, such persons may, under suitable regulations, be occasionally employed in preaching and exhortation. Thus Philip the deacon was also chosen to be an evangelist, to assist the apostles in preaching.

It appears both scriptural and rational that such officers should be chosen by the church; and when chosen, ought to be solemnly set apart to the office by

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prayer; a practice, in too many instances, quite neglected, and in reference to which, there needs a revival of primitive discipline.

Those who are chosen to this office require, for the full and successful discharge of its duties, a union of suitable *qualifications*, such as are not to be found existing in all good men. The apostles furnished the disciples at Jerusalem with an outline of the character, saying, "Look ye out among you seven men of *honest report*, full of the *Holy Ghost* and *wisdom*;" verse 3. And the Apostle Paul gave Timothy other and more specific traits of character necessary to form a good deacon. See 1 Tim. iii. 8—13.

These various qualifications may be ranged under the following classes: viz. spiritual, intellectual, moral, and social.

A deacon should possess *spiritual* qualifications. He is to be chosen from among the members of the church, all of whom are supposed to possess enlightened minds and renewed hearts; and in the choice of one or more to official stations, regard should be had to the eminence of spiritual gifts; they should be "full of the *Holy Ghost*." They are to "hold the mystery of faith, in a pure conscience,"—having their understandings well furnished with gospel truth, and their hearts deeply imbued with its spirit. To spiritual should be added *intellectual* qualifications. They should be full of "wisdom," or prudence. It requires a knowledge of the world, of men, and things; a readiness in the transaction of secular concerns, in order to a faithful and successful discharge of the office of deacon in a church of Christ: and to these should be added certain *moral* and *social* qualities: "men of *honest report*,"—of superior moral worth, who have a good report of them that are without; whose charac-

ters stand the most rigid scrutiny in every domestic and social relation, displaying fidelity as husbands, prudence as fathers, hospitality as friends, sincerity in conversation, fidelity in conduct, temperance in the use of lawful enjoyments; in a word, they must be "blameless." Such are the qualifications insisted on by Paul, when writing to Timothy, in the passage before quoted, and furnishing him with directions for regulating the affairs of the house of God.

Happy would it have been for the church, and greatly conducive to its peace and prosperity, if, in the choice of persons to fill up this office, a more rigid adherence to apostolic advice had been observed; but in too many instances, men have been chosen merely from a regard to their wealth, their influence, or their intellect; and such persons, finding themselves invested with an official character, and mistaking its real nature and design, have assumed a dictatorial authority, and lorded it over the whole community; and, like Diotrephes of old, have loved to have the pre-eminence; and all this for want of those qualifications which are necessary. Where the mind is truly enlightened, and the heart deeply imbued with divine truth, where the breast is inflamed with a pure and ardent love to Christ, and a zeal for his glory; such will ever be ready to perform the meanest and most laborious services in the church of Christ, and to consider themselves as servants of the church for Jesus's sake. Such will display all fidelity and impartiality in distributing the alms, and managing the secular affairs of the church. Instead of viewing the office as a mere honorary degree, and making it a sinecure, they will manifest a prevailing concern for the peace and prosperity of the church, and with activity and di-

ligence, will engage in the duties of their office. Though a considerable demand should be made on their time and their exertions, such will do all things with a single eye to the glory of God.

Happy is that church, which is favoured with such officers as these: many *advantages* may be anticipated from their exertions. In the primitive church, after the deacons were chosen, it is added, "And the word of God increased, and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly;"—results devoutly to be wished.

When there are active, faithful, wise, and holy men, to preside over and manage the secular concerns of the church, it will afford much assistance and encouragement to the minister, by relieving him from the necessity of attending to many distracting and delicate duties. It is sufficient for him to watch over the spiritual concerns of the flock. To read and study the scriptures; to preach the word; to administer the ordinances; and to perform, faithfully, the other duties devolving on the pastor, furnish sufficient employment for the most active and vigorous mind; and where a minister is obliged, from a want of suitable persons in his congregation, to attend to the secular concerns of the society, it must unavoidably distract his attention, and oft-times involve him in difficulties; but where such officers exist, the minister is relieved, and can attend without distraction to the work of the ministry: he will be enabled to study more diligently, and preach more fervently, and probably greater good will result from his ministration.

Such deacons will also contribute much to the good order and comfort of a christian community; with a vigilant inspection, they will look well to every part of the household; and see that all

things be done decently and in order; they will stimulate by example and precept; they will call into exercise the benevolent feelings of the rich, and seek to turn the tide of benevolence into those channels in which it may flow, in due proportions, to the most suitable objects. Such a wise and prudent administration will inspire the members with confidence; it will strengthen the bond of brotherly love, and promote the peace and harmony of the church; a happy medium of communication will be formed between minister and people, which will secure to the former a more extended knowledge of the state of his flock, than he would obtain by the most vigilant and active inspection, if left to his own unassisted efforts: and as in a large family, there is need of a proportionate number of servants, on whom special and appropriate duties may regularly devolve, by which the order and comfort of the household are promoted: so it is in the church, the house of God; the existence of a sufficient number of suitable servants, to minister in word and doctrine, and to "serve tables," will ever tend to promote the peace and comfort of the church. And where ministers and deacons go hand in hand, each diligently occupied in discharging the duties of their respective stations, and striving with united energy to advance the cause of God; then we may expect to see much church prosperity.

Those who have been chosen to this office by the free and unanimous suffrage of their fellow members, may view it as no small honour conferred on them, to be deemed worthy of the confidence of the church, and to be intrusted with the management of its temporal affairs. It should be their concern to cultivate those excellencies, and to seek an eminent

degree of all those social, moral, intellectual, and spiritual qualifications, which will fit them for the discharge of their duties.

Let such look up to him with whom is the residue of the Spirit, —keep in view the glory of Christ, —think much of the advantages resulting from a wise and active administration,—and be animated by a frequent reference to that day, when the Great Head of the church will say, “ Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

The members of christian churches are under obligations to assist and encourage those whom they have chosen to fill this useful and important office. They should assist them by the liberality of their contributions, and thus furnish them with the means of meeting every necessary expense, and of satisfying every reasonable demand: and while by the *amount* of their contributions they should replenish the public purse, by their *promptitude* and *regularity*, they should seek to diminish, as much as possible, the labours of the deacons.

The church should encourage its officers by showing a readiness to concur in any plans calculated to advance the interests of the society, and the glory of God. It sometimes happens in churches, in consequence of unholy jealousies between the members, and those in office, that every plan is thwarted, and the best concerted measures rendered abortive.

Deacons should be assisted by the fervent prayers of the church for that wisdom which is profitable to direct, and that grace which will render them humble and faithful.

May the spirit of love be diffused abroad among the churches of Christ; when this abounds, there will be no evil surmisings, wrath, contention, and confusion; there will be no lordly domina-

CONG. MAG. NO. 11.

tion in the minister; no tyranny or usurpation in the deacons; no apathy or insubordination in the people: the spirit of love in Christ Jesus will pervade and amalgamate the whole mass, and in the peace, the harmony, and the order of the whole community, there will be a revival of primitive simplicity.

Φιλαγαθαταξιος.

#### FRAGMENTS OF DR. WATTS.

THE biographer of this eminent divine remarks, that “ in common conversation, he was almost unequalled. Indeed no person (says he) with whom I was ever acquainted spoke with more ease, readiness, or elegance, than he did; and as his discourse flowed like a clear full stream from an inexhaustible fountain, so it was very instructive and entertaining. I have been at some pains to collect some proofs of this kind, a few of which are now laid before the reader.”

“ I look upon the Apostle Paul, and Cicero, to be the greatest geniuses that ever appeared in our world.”

“ Dr. Owen excelled as an experimental, and Mr. Baxter, as a practical divine.”

“ The greatest preachers in my younger time were Mr. John Howe, and Mr. Thomas Gouge.” Accordingly we find both these ministers eminently distinguished by the Doctor in his Lyric Poems. How exquisitely fine is that compliment paid Mr. Howe, in his ode to him!

“ Great man, permit the muse to climb,  
And seat her at thy feet:” &c.

importing that the muse, after she had soared to the highest pitch her wings could elevate her, could ascend no higher than to sit at his feet. The closing lines in his elegy on Mr. Gouge contain also an encomium of the first magnitude upon Mr. Howe,

where in the rapture of his muse,  
and the height of his affection and  
esteem, the Doctor says,

" Howe is a great and single name :  
Amidst the crowd he stands alone :--  
He stands, but with his starry pinions on,  
Drest for the flight, and ready to be gone.  
Eternal God, command his stay,  
And stretch the months of his delay ;  
Oh, we could wish his age was one immortal day !  
But when the flaming chariots come,  
And shining guards attend the prophet home,  
Amidst a thousand weeping eyes,  
Send an Elisha down, a soul of equal size,  
Or burn this worthless globe, and take us to the  
skies."

" If in your preaching (to a young minister) you perceive you have made a mistake, don't go back to rectify it. Many of the congregation may not notice it; and they who do, will excuse it: but if you try to mend it, you expose the blunder to the observation of all.—Never mind spoiling a well-turned period, if you may but have the hope of reaching a conscience. Polished and harmonious language is oftentimes like oil flowing smoothly over solid marble, which leaves no traces behind it."

" I could wish young ministers in the country might be allowed by their people to read a part of Mr. Henry's *Exposition of the Bible*, or repeat a sermon from some good author one part of the Lord's day, as it is certainly too much for them to compose two sermons a week so early in life."

" St. Paul's *thorn in the flesh*, mentioned 2 Corinthians, xii. 7, was the debilitated state of his nerves, occasioned by the overpowering glories of heaven; from whence I conclude, that the apostle was in the *body*, when he was caught up into paradise." The Doctor's conjecture admirably agrees with what the apostle says concerning himself, that he was with the Corinthians, " in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." 1 Cor. ii. 3.

" Ordinary grief may be expressed by tears and lamenta-

tions; but there is a *superlative* degree of grief, for which nature has no expression."

" The passions are the *gales* of life, and it is religion only that can prevent them from rising into a *tempest*."

" Faith kept in lively exercise can make roses spring out of the midst of thorns, and change the briars of the wilderness into the fruit-trees of paradise."

" The robe of religion came fair and well-proportioned from the hand of its Maker: if we see it soiled and distorted, the fault is in the person who wears it."

" I would rather be the author of Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted*, than of Milton's *Paradise Lost*."

MERLIN.

#### PARENTAL INSTRUCTION.

*On the evils resulting from the want of parental attention to the religious and moral instruction of children.*

THAT the religious education of his children is a concern of the utmost importance, no conscientious parent is disposed to deny. He admits the claim of the infant mind to tender and careful cultivation. He considers himself as standing in a place of high responsibility, and to "train up his child in the way he should go," he feels to be an imperious duty, which he cannot neglect without incurring a great degree of guilt. Happy would it be for the rising generation, happy for parents themselves, and for the world at large, if these feelings were more generally acknowledged and obeyed. It is, however, too common to limit the provision we make for our children to the wants and conveniences of the *present* life. Chiefly concerned about "what they shall eat, or what they shall drink, and wherewithal they shall be clothed," we suffer the demands

of the body to drown the cries of the immortal mind for its congenial nourishment. Sensible objects attract and absorb our attention, while the invisible, though infinitely nobler part, is denied its just regard. A conduct certainly very preposterous. We reverse the order of things. We make that a *primary* which ought to be a *secondary* consideration, and teach our children, by our own example, to contradict that excellent rule of christianity, "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness."

The evil of neglecting the reasonable demands of *external* nature, strikes us with peculiar force. We view it with dread, and we labour with timely care to prevent it. This is well; and this we ought to do, without leaving the other undone. Great, incalculably great, is the evil to be dreaded for our children from the neglect of their *religious* instruction. It is an evil which may be *immediately* observed, which spreads *increasingly* through life, and which involves *eternal consequences*.

The *immediate* evil resulting from a neglect of religious instruction is observable, not only in the child's extreme ignorance of whatever is morally good, but in the pernicious habits which he inevitably contracts. That the human mind, as soon as it begins to act, discovers a bias to evil, experience, I think, will not allow us to dispute.\* Hence that impatient, peevish, contradictory, temper, so common to very young children, especially after indulgence; and hence their readier and easier imitation of a *bad*, than of a *good* example. Now, if no wholesome restraint is imposed, if

this evil bias is not counteracted, what are we to expect? What, but all that folly, all that deceit, all that disobedience, and all those other vicious propensities, which, alas, we have too frequent reason to lament in the disposition and behaviour of our youth? The mind cannot remain wholly inactive. It has received a productive energy from its Creator, and unless the seeds of virtue are early sown in its soil, that energy will be spent on the noxious weeds and poisonous fruits of vice. "Left without moral cultivation it resembles the field of the sluggard, and the vineyard of the man void of understanding. The passenger remarks that "it is all grown over with thorns, and nettles have covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof is broken down."† And what parent so insensible as not to feel those thorns and nettles in the untoward disposition of his neglected child? It may be, he is indifferent about the culture of the tender mind; but he will often be chagrined with the sad consequences of that indifference. He may not sufficiently feel the importance of religious instruction; but the neglect of it will prove to him a fruitful source of inquietude and pain. The thorns and thistles will not gall him the less that he is unwilling to acknowledge them the growth of his own negligence. And it cannot be denied that herein the parent is justly punished. How wisely has God connected *duty* with *reward*, and *disobedience* with *punishment*!

"Take this child, and nurse it for me," is the commission of Heaven to every parent;—obey, and you are rewarded with dutiful and tender returns on the part of your child;—disregard the

\* "I have seen," exclaims St. Austin, "a jealous child, it could not speak; but its face was pale, and the eyes were irritated against an infant that was suckled with it."

† Ut si animum dicas excolendum, similitudine utaris terra, quae neglecta sentes atque dumas, exulta fructus creat.

QUINTILLIAN.

heavenly voice, and you are punished with contempt of parental authority; for it will be found, in general, that the youth who never hears of his duty to his Creator, is deficient in filial reverence and obedience.\*

Abraham, the venerable father of the Jewish nation, has obtained the testimony of the Holy Ghost in favour of his paternal care. "I know my servant Abraham," says the Lord, "that he will command his children and his household after him, and they will keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." He tutored Isaac to the fear of the Lord, and the reward of this conscientious parent, in the obedience and meek submission of his pious son, is sufficiently acknowledged by every one who reads his Bible. But is it possible, without very painful regret, to contrast with this the sad story of Eli and his wicked sons? It is said of these young men that "they knew not the Lord." Their sin was so great that he sent a prophet to denounce his righteous judgment against the too indulgent parent and his family. Hear it, ye that connive at the depravity of your offspring, hear it, and tremble! "Thus saith the Lord, wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice, and at mine offering, and honourest thy

sons above me? Behold, the days come that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house. And this shall be a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die, both of them!" Nor can we read, without similar emotions, the case of Adonijah, one of David's sons. "Hini his father had not displeased at any time, in saying, why hast thou done so?" A sufficient intimation of the parent's extreme indulgence. This remark upon his domestic education seems to have been made by the sacred historian, as if to prepare us for the melancholy sequel. The young prince contracted a spirit of insubordination, embittered the last hours of his father's life by a rash rebellion, and brought himself and his adherents to speedy destruction.

The neglect of early instruction, it has been farther observed, is an evil to the child which spreads increasingly through life. Thorns and thistles undisturbed will rapidly enlarge. See how the uncultivated field is overgrown with rank, pernicious, weeds!—how fast they multiply, —how thick they stand together, and intertwine their numerous arms! They usurp the whole surface; and should a single grain of useful seed chance to drop upon it, there is no vacant soil to receive it; or should it be permitted to shoot a green leaf into view, how feebly, how imperfectly does it rise, and how soon does it perish for want of vegetable food! Such is the condition of the neglected mind. The dawn of reason, which is the signal for commencing a rational education, has been suffered to pass away unimproved, and vice obtains an easy and early possession of the heart. At first, it breaks out in

\* I knew a parent who had sadly neglected the religious and moral instruction of his children, and who was in consequence exposed to many grievous mortifications. At no period of my life do I remember having been more shocked, than at a scene between him and his son, which I happened to witness. The father had gently reproved the young man for some boastful expressions he had uttered, when he was presently under the truly pitiable necessity of withdrawing from his infuriate son, who poured upon him the most abusive language, mixed with imprecations too horrid to be repeated! It is worthy of remark, that this unhappy being soon after died in a miserable state, oppressed with poverty, and emaciated with disease.

a few venial offences, and just discovers its presence. But it is an insidious foe. If not crushed on its first appearance, it gains increasingly upon the soul, and, shaping into innumerable varieties, seizes on all its powers. Vice is naturally despotic; it aspires to universal dominion; and where motives to virtue are never presented, it will most assuredly obtain it. Untaught in moral distinctions, the judgment will be involved in darkness, and prove perverse in its decisions: unaccustomed to wholesome restraint, the desires will capriciously fix on the most improper objects: never directed to the sublimer beauties of religion, the affections will become grovelling and impure; while the will, a stranger to the power of godliness, grows obstinately disobedient, and is led away captive by the wild and unhallowed passions of a natural mind. Such is the sad, but too probable experience of those whose earliest years have been favoured with no religious tuition. Poor neglected rationalists!—how I pity you!—my heart bleeds for you. I see you in the morning of your days, in all your gaiety, and I ask, what are you?—What but so many proofs of original depravity,—embryos of future scourges to your parents, to society, to yourselves;—the victims of moral corruption, and the nurslings of hell!

What a dreadful prospect does this afford! It cannot surely be suggested to an affectionate parent without creating an alarm terminating in a serious resolve to use every effort, under divine assistance, to reverse it. Without this, there is no rational ground to hope that the worst consequences shall not be realized. It is but just to fear that the neglected child will become a vicious youth; and the vicious youth, a hardy and ultimately impenitent veteran

in the ways of wickedness. Those evil passions that broke out at first into little fits of fretfulness and rage, encouraged, perhaps, with a smile on the countenance that should have awed them into silence, strengthen into pride, self-conceit, contempt of authority, and an habitual propensity to criminal pursuits. That such is the general process is a fact, alas, too strikingly corroborated by the history of mankind. This maxim is written, as it were, in large capitals, as a running title on the pages of that history, **THE UNINSTRUCTED MIND HAS A MELANCHOLY TENDENCY TO DETERIORATION.** Here then we have a general law, by which to explain many phenomena of the moral world. Upon this we may fairly reason. As in the material world, we uniformly expect the same results from the same combination of circumstances; so, in the affairs of mind, we naturally conclude that the same treatment will operate the same effects. Hence a wise and pious tuition in tender years is expected to ensure, for the rest of life, a continuance in wisdom and piety; while, on the other hand, it is proved, by daily experience, that “train up a child in the way he should *not* go, and when he is old, he will *certainly* be wicked.” Yes, the first impressions are the most durable. The strongest propensities are formed in childhood, and if they are bad, as they will undoubtedly be, where religious education is neglected, they harden into habits which are not easily overcome. For the truth of this, may I not appeal to an expression too commonly found in the mouths of adults in wickedness? “I am too old to learn; my habits are fixed, and cannot be changed.” Such, indeed, is the confirming power of evil habits, that a prophet places the probability of reformation in a

case of this kind, on the same footing with that of a controul over the uniform operations of nature : " Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots ?—then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil."

If these, then, are general laws of mind, fairly deducible from daily observation, how great is the danger of neglecting early instruction. For let it be remembered, that the *neglect* of virtuous and godly tuition is a *positive training* to irreligion and vice. He that is not *for* religion, is *against* her. There can be no neutrality here. Our Lord in the gospel describes only two ways ; the one is broad, and leads to destruction ; the other is narrow, and leads to life. There is no intermediate path ; and the youth who has not been led into the safe and narrow way, will, of necessity, be found in the broad way, running a dangerous and progressive course of folly. And how can it be otherwise ? The native darkness of his mind, never penetrated with a single ray of religious instruction, becomes grosser and grosser. Errors multiply and rule the judgment. Having no previous principles to supplant, they gain an easy ascendancy. Every thing is now beheld through the medium of strong delusion. Truth, if it be offered, is rejected with impatience. It has no beauty, nor comeliness, in it to attract a mind of this description. In his childhood, it had not gained his reverence ; and as he grows up, he learns to persecute it with ridicule and contempt. How often in the case of a neglected and deluded youth, has a pious friend been forced to close the kindest remonstrances with this despairing exclamation, " Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell the truth ?"

Nor is the evil confined to sentiment. The fountain is impure, and the streams which it sends forth cannot be wholesome. This corruption of principle produces all the sad variety of moral turpitude. " Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean ?" It is excellently advised by Solomon, " keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." This is the advice of sage experience ; for the heart is that important department which commands the whole man. Our Lord traces from the natural heart all that is morally bad. " Out of the heart," he says, " proceed evil thoughts," and from these he derives a black catalogue of crimes, which, in the truest sense of the word, " defile the man." Those evil thoughts, accustomed to work in the uncultivated mind, as in their native region, exhibit their respective efficiencies in the conversation and conduct. They are restless traitors, which the infatuated youth carries and fosters in his bosom, till they awaken the baneful passions which impel him to every act of indiscretion and criminality. Behold that town without its fortifications. It is not merely *exposed* to the ravages of an enemy ; but it invites him to take possession, and offers itself an easy prey to riot, and to plunder, and to slavery ! Such is an exact emblem of the heart which is left unguarded by religious principle. A temptation attacks, and no preparation is made for defence. There is no grace to resist, and to say, " How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God ?" Fatal compliance is therefore unavoidable ; and the first temptation, like the devil in the parable, brings with it seven others more dreadful than itself, but still more welcome, and still more successful. The passions which now become the tyrants of the soul, must be gratified. God

and his laws are unknown, or despised. Warning comes too late. The tears of mortified, disappointed parents, are ridiculed. Character, health, fortune, friends, are sacrificed;—to what? To pleasure, shall I say? Nay, but to infamy, disease, remorse, and wretchedness! Melancholy issue!

But this is not all. The subject rises infinitely higher in its importance, when we consider, that the neglect of religious instruction in early youth is an evil which often involves *eternal* consequences. These consequences are of the most dreadful nature, and calculated to excite in the mind of a thinking parent the most terrific ideas. The evil of this neglect, great as it is in the present life, does not terminate with it; it reaches into another world: and oh, what an awful thought, there it cannot be remedied! While the soul continues in union with the body, the case, however bad, must not be thought desperate. The careless parent may be roused to a sense of his criminal neglect. He may be brought to weep over his abused offspring, and his acute sensations of self-reproach and paternal commiseration may force tears from his eyes, that, through the blessing of God, may soften their hearts, and prove the means of their recovery. But when the immortal spirit is summoned from the clay tenement, to take its trial before the Judge of all, it is past time to correct the error. “As the tree falls, so must it lie.” And if the surviving parent is now made conscious of having withheld from that soul the means of spiritual life, how shocking must the reflection be! It is *now* only, but too late, that he feels the weighty importance of that solemn charge given by the Lord to the prophet, as if it had been actually addressed to himself; “Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel;

therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked of his way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand.” What an awful accountability is here expressed! A parent who appropriates such a charge as this, and whose conscience accuses him of having neglected, till it is too late, to fulfil it, is in no enviable case. I believe that it is often the regret of the best of men, when their children are taken from them, that their religious instruction has been so deficient. Upon these occasions, a new solicitude about the fate of their offspring is excited. However great their concern, however strong their exertions when opportunities existed, they reckon them all by far too little, in comparison of what they *now* feel were due on their part. Sometimes, indeed, the departure of a child is such as to leave a pleasing hope in the mind of a pious parent; and this hope more than compensates for his laborious instrumentality in training the disembodied soul for glory. A parent naturally shares in the happiness of his child. He cannot be indifferent to any thing that concerns him. He follows him while still in the body, through all the probable events of his future life, and anticipates the various turns of Providence which may yet distinguish him. But his anticipations, if he has any religious feeling, are not confined to the shifting scenes of the present state. He has many an anxious thought about the unalterable condition of the soul in another world. And if, when his young charge is taken from him, he has a well-grounded hope that the soul, once the burden of his

frequent prayers, and the object of his pious instruction, is now in possession of eternal bliss, what consolation is his under the loss of his society ! What joy in reflecting on the glory to which he is exalted ! What gratitude for the part committed to him of pointing out the way that led to the blessed issue !

But contemplate an opposite case,—that of a parent, who, bereaved of his child, is tortured with the recollection of duties omitted, or carelessly performed,—duties to which that child, now no longer his, had a claim the most natural, and the most solemn that can possibly be conceived. The omission is not now to be made up. The opportunity of offering some preparatory instruction to the departing soul is lost for ever. “ Alas, and must my own offspring perish for lack of that knowledge which it was my part to communicate ? Intolerable thought ! Perhaps even now, that much neglected soul is bearing a just testimony before the bar of God against my unnatural indifference to her immortal interests. O cruel neglect !—O unhappy father ! Have I brought into existence a human being, only for misery, and that eternal ? Would to God I had never been, or that— but what do I say ? Would to God I had done my duty ! He gave me opportunities of saving him, and I neglected them. His intended blessings are, by my abuse, converted into curses. What aggravated guilt ! That lifeless corpse before me, now about to mingle with the sordid dust, but lately occupied my whole concern. Upon it I heaped my favours, regardless of the inhabitant within. That body, while it lived, took all the attention, engulphed all the anxieties of my mind ; and the soul that cannot die was sacrificed to the indulgences of this temporary

frame. And now it mocks my unavailing solicitude : it reproaches me for a fondness so sinfully misplaced. With a shrewdness which the world approved, I had provided for the temporal interests of my child. Methought I saw into his career in life, and had wisely prepared for all its vicissitudes. Alas, how infatuate ! oh, that I had employed half this ill-directed care to the religious instruction of the precious, precious soul ! Then, with the blessing of God, my child would have been happily prepared for his final change. Then, at least, should I have delivered my own soul, nor felt, as I now do, the unutterable anguish of a self-condemning conscience !”

These, and more awful still than these, have, no doubt been the reflections of many parents, who, after having neglected the religious instruction of their children, have not, till too late, been sensible of the guilt they have thus contracted.

I ask any father, or any mother, of religious feeling, whether the above reflections are represented in language too impassioned for the case supposed. Is it not more than probable that a parent whose conscience is thus awakened, must experience a torture of mind which his tongue cannot express,—a terror of soul, beyond the colouring of language to depict ?—Merciful God, I beseech thee, let no such case ever occur within my knowledge !—Oh, let not the hand that now writes, ever tremble under the pressure of convictions so awful ; nor let the eye that now reads ever weep tears of remorse so bitter !

It ought, indeed, to be observed, that it is by no means consistent with right notions of the divine government, to suppose that the eternal state of a human soul is left to the mercy of any

creature, or creatures, whatever. No, the complexion of eternal things is not so capriciously determined. This momentous article, like all other of God's ways, is settled by a justice, combined with a wisdom and a goodness, each of them perfect, and altogether divine. But the dispensations of grace are regulated in a way generally analogous to the operations of nature. Appropriate means are employed in both, without the application of which, the desirable end cannot legitimately be expected. And surely no means of conveying moral and religious instruction to the young mind can be more natural than those of parental exertion. A child is a precious trust, which God first and most emphatically deposits in the hands of the parent. The young mind is the soil intended for cultivation, and the parent the husbandman, under God, to labour upon it. As therefore "the sluggard, who will not plow by reason of the cold," so the parent, who will not afford to his child the religious instruction which he ought to communicate, endangers the immortal interests of his offspring, and prepares for himself nothing but disappointment, vexation, and remorse.

B. L.

ON THE RIGHT OF SEAT-HOLDERS IN THE ELECTION OF MINISTERS.

To the Editors. IN your Magazine for the present month, I observe a request from one of your correspondents, to know upon what authority seat-holders claim an equal right with members of churches in the election of ministers. The subject is one of the greatest importance to dissenters; and when the bearings of it are duly considered, it appears remarkable that it should have so long slumbered in undisturbed repose, and escaped the

CONG. MAG. NO. 11.

ordeal of public discussion. But since it is now brought forward, it is hoped that it will not be suffered to die away, but that it will obtain a due share of the attention of those who, in matters purely religious, profess to regard the authority of God only.

In replying to the request of your correspondent, allow me in the first place to observe, that a christian church is a society of believers in the doctrines of Jesus Christ, voluntarily associating together for the purpose of obeying the commandments, and observing the ordinances, of the great Head of the church; thereby promoting each other's spiritual welfare, and showing forth his perfections, who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light.

Now, according to the New Testament, the office bearers in such a society are to be looked for from among themselves, and by them appointed to fill those offices, whether of pastors or deacons. It follows, then, that they, *the members of the church*, are to be the *sole* judges of their qualifications for these offices, and that to *them* is confined the right of their election.

To deny this as being the exclusive right of a christian church, is not only to deny it a privilege common to the most unimportant societies, but is, in effect, an opposing of the authority of God.

And, indeed, it was not till that *man of sin*, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, succeeded in placing himself in the temple or church of God, that any thing like foreign interference on this subject made its appearance. When, however, christians became so far blinded as to yield their natural rights to this monster of iniquity, things began to wear a very different aspect; and to this, as their source, we may easily trace the various

ramifications of that truly anti-christian and mischievous system of patronage which in the present day proves such a hinderance to the propagation of christianity, and is the direct means of keeping up a lasting reproach on its precious name. But that the right of choosing their own office bearers belongs exclusively to the members of a christian church, needs no farther proof than a mere reference to the history of the churches planted by the apostles, as given in the New Testament. And as those churches are professedly taken as the model of our modern churches, and as the authority for their very existence;—it follows, that the right of those who are *not members* of a christian church to interfere in the election of the ministers of that church, amounts precisely to nothing at all.

It will be readily seen, however, that this view of the subject is entirely limited to those churches which are formed on the model of the apostolic churches. With the majority of dissenting churches in this country, (for we speak not of churches by law established,) the case stands far otherwise. Here there is an improper connexion formed between the church and the world; or, to use a phrase somewhat less offensive, between the church and the congregation. By means of this connexion, it very often happens that men totally destitute of christian principles have not only great power in the church, but almost the whole sway of influence over both the church and its ministers. Now, however unscriptural such power may be, it must be allowed to belong by *right* to those who hold it. It is a power which the church itself has put into their hands, and in return for which the church has received their property; and it is well known

that, in many instances, were these to withdraw their property, the churches would be plunged into pecuniary embarrassments of a very serious nature. Nay more, were the subscribers to the *interest*, as it is termed, who are *not members* of the church, to withhold their subscriptions, the church, alas, would not only be without a minister, but destitute of a house to meet in, and stripped of that respectability in the eyes of the world, on which, it is feared, too much stress is often laid.

This then being the ground on which the right of the seat-holder rests, your correspondent will at once perceive that the authority of such a person, although not a member of the church, must often far exceed that of a member; and, indeed, that it will be in exact proportion to the sum subscribed. It is not to be wondered at if the members of such churches often feel such a state of things rather galling; but however much they may feel, there is no room for complaining; it is their own act; and the seat-holder may, with great propriety, reply, "why do you receive my property, and appropriate it to the support of your minister, while you refuse me the right of voting in his election?"

The evils arising from such a system are numerous and extensive. The church, by parting with its exclusive right, subjects itself to much vexatious treatment from men who are much more under the influence of a worldly spirit than the love of God.

The minister is placed under strong temptations to unfaithfulness in the discharge of his duty; and the subscribers, who are not members, are apt to imagine that their subscriptions are a compensation for their positive neglect of important duties. Let it not be supposed that we mean to unchristianize all seat-holders who

are not members of the church where they attend:—no, many of them are exemplary christians, and are only prevented from joining the church by the stumbling blocks which some of its members put in the way.

But while this is the case with some, it is a melancholy fact that there are others from whom churches continue to receive regular contributions, after having expelled them from their communion. Can this be reconciled with the principles of the New Testament? Let it be remembered that these contributions are received on the ground of religion;—professedly in the name of

the Lord Jesus Christ;—does not this amount to fellowship?

Hoping that these remarks may contribute to draw the attention of the disciples of Jesus to a subject that so deeply involves their comfort and reputation,

I remain, &c.

September 5.

J. M.

[The Editors have received several other excellent papers on the above topic, some of them taking the opposite view of this subject, one of which they mean to insert, but cannot, for reasons which must be very obvious, allow of a more extended notice of it.]

## REVIEW OF BOOKS.

*On Protestant Nonconformity. By Josiah Conder.*

(Continued from page 494.)

In extending our remarks upon these volumes to a second, and it may be to a yet future number, we confess that we have felt some degree of embarrassment lest we should be suspected of too strong an attachment to a controversy which, in its very existence, as well as in its effects, has been the humiliation and desolation of the protestant cause; and which, in its present vigorous revival, might seem to indicate the growth of an illiberal spirit, at a period when a degree of unanimity prevails, which promises to restore to christianity some of the glories of which, in more stormy times, it had been shorn. We know the strong tone assumed by some eminent characters, in condemning altogether the agitation of such subjects in so friendly an age; the efforts made by many clergymen to shut them out from the observation and inquiry of their people, or to number them with those questions, which are too subtle, or too perilous, for any but initiated minds to meddle with; we know the fears excited in many quarters, when any one does but *peep, or mutter, or move the wing*; we know the grave admonitions which are constantly addressed to the people of this realm, both from the pulpit and the press, not to doubt for a moment that all must be right and sacred within the limits of episcopal dominion, and that a disposition to pry into the ecclesiastical *arcana*, or to question the legitimacy of any of those spiritual decisions, which the laws of the land have long since

established, bespeaks a dereliction of loyalty to the government, and cannot be indulged, by any individual, without imminent peril to his peace, his piety, or even his salvation.

Now in the face of all these formidable considerations, we have so much confidence in the liberality and discernment of our readers, that we venture to say, there is no controversy, which is not strictly of a doctrinal nature, more important to be brought forward at the present time, than the one before us, and that there never has been, since the times of great ecclesiastical commotion, a more favourable period for its dispassionate consideration. Every part of christianity will bear the strictest examination, and every part of christian churches ought to be subjected to the severest test. There should be nothing in the system that requires concealment. Let the principles of all protestant churches at least, be brought to the final criterion: “to the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” We protest against all half measures with error. It is always pernicious, and in every degree. The truth only can be ultimately profitable; and it is the importance of the truths at stake in this controversy, which impels us, in defiance of all the string of ungracious epithets that may be applied to us, to invite the most serious and profound attention of all, to a question but very imperfectly understood, and which too many on both sides would hush up in secrecy or repose.

For our own part, we disclaim all in-

tention but that of advancing a spirit of affectionate fraternity among all genuine christians ; and we feel satisfied, that there is a firm and sublime principle in the gospel, not yet well understood, on which "they all may be one." We have no party designs, and we despise a sectarian spirit. This controversy should not have found a place in our pages, if we had not felt thoroughly convinced, that the promotion of love and unity among all denominations of protestants, is most intimately connected with those vital principles of nonconformity, which Mr. Conder has brought before his readers.

There exists, in the present day, a strong tendency to represent the separation from the establishment, as bigoted and illiberal, or arising from a prejudiced attachment to the peculiar sentiments and manners of a sect. Whereas the very reverse is the fact. The term *dissent*, used in relation to the church, by the vast proportion of those included in it, imports separation **ONLY** from the acknowledged and disputable super-additions, which human authority, in the form of legal or ecclesiastical enactments, has presumed to make to the authority of our **ONE LORD**. This was the very point at which the dissension originally commenced. Nonconformity has a two-fold reference. In the positive acceptation, the term signifies the fullest submission to the exclusive dictates of revelation, as of individual and conscientious interpretation ; and in its negative, that is, its direct reference, it signifies only a rejection of human decisions, over and above those confessedly divine, as equally obligatory with the will of Christ, or indeed as possessing any obligation at all in religious duties ; and even though it may be conceded, that those human additions are innocent, or useful, and might be conformed to, if left indifferent ; yet, that the spirit and the principle that would *authoritatively* or *penally* enforce them, are anti-christian, and that then, and therefore, nonconformity becomes a positive duty. "One is your master, even Christ," is a declaration of paramount authority, that imports in its first and highest sense, that *but one* is our master.

This appears to us the very core of the controversy to which these volumes relate ; and, excepting the essentials of christian doctrine, we know of no topic that has stronger claims upon the attention of every private christian, and none with which the external and visible glory of the church of Christ, and the progress of christianity in the world, are more closely allied. We, therefore, deny that this is a party question. It is a contest for the authority of Christ in

his own church, and a dutiful adherence to that spirit of charity and forbearance in things non-essential, which christianity every where enforces, but which the church of England, both in principle and practice, has violated. We deprecate the idea of being accounted the advocates of sectarianism and bigotry, or the panegyrists of such advocates. "Wherefore should the term dissenters be used in reference to feelings and interests which belong to no party, and in which, but for the unhappy influence of schismatical prejudices, all true christians would participate. Dissent is itself a mere negation, an accidental predicament. But the principles on which dissent is founded, are not the tenets of a sect ; they are truths of a nature as universal as the sphere of christianity, and they are of importance chiefly as conducive to its triumphs." p. 605.

This is the light in which Mr. Conder has endeavoured to place the subject of his volumes, and it is devoutly to be wished, that every reader may view it under the same aspect. Nonconformity is considered in all its principal, and in many of its minor bearings. We can with pleasure state, that the author has exhibited most of the fundamental principles of dissent, in a position altogether unassailable. His plan is very comprehensive, and embraces a more or less elaborate discussion of an immense variety of topics ; and we must confess that we felt not a little alarmed, on inspecting the table of contents, to find that we were to be led through so wide a field of disquisition, within the space of 600 moderate pages. We will not dissemble that we should have been better pleased with an abridgment of the plan, and an extension of some of the leading subjects ; not that we mean to insinuate, that he has introduced irrelevant or unimportant matter, but that he has been unavoidably compelled to pass rapidly, and in a kind of coasting-voyage, over some of the more essential arguments, which, had his plan been less multiform, might have received advantageous enlargement.

The work consists of four books. The first is preliminary : the second on church government : the third on the rites and services of the church : and the fourth on ecclesiastical establishments. We must be allowed to express our doubts with respect to the propriety of this arrangement. One whole book out of four, devoted to preliminary discussion, appears to us, upon the supposition that it is really preliminary, disproportionate ; and, upon the admission that it is not altogether preliminary, highly injudicious, as to the effect upon the rea-

der's mind: for, while he considers him-self only in the vestibule of the subject, he will either saunter through it with relaxed attention, or pass it with a few hasty steps, to come at once to the more immediate object of his curiosity. The fact is, that several of the topics which come under review in this first book, are closely connected with the very essence of the main question; and would, with the utmost facility and symmetry, unite with subsequent parts of the discussion. We have noticed these things principally in reference to the *effect*; and we cannot but regret, that several of the sections of this book, written, as they are, with considerable vigour, both of thought and language, should, from their loose and ill-sorted appearance, serve rather as incumbrances than as helps to the general argument. There are two or three preliminary sections which gratified us exceedingly; and which are written nearly in Mr. Conder's best manner. In particular, we should name the section *on the nature of christian profession*; which, we conceive, would have been better placed in connexion with the second chapter of Book II. *on the law of admission*. After contrasting, in the section preceding the one we refer to, the Jewish and Christian dispensations, and showing that the one was a visible, and the other a spiritual economy, he says;

"The christian catholic church, then, to correspond to this view of the nature and design of christianity, must be considered as an institution of a purely spiritual nature, and it can be visible only in a moral sense. Considering it, therefore, as a visible company, or a collection of visible companies of believers, we proceed to inquire upon what principles the incorporation of members should be founded, or what is the nature of that profession which entitles an individual to be recognised as a member of the visible church of Christ.

"In a country in which the truth of christianity is generally admitted, and its authority outwardly acknowledged, no criterion of the existence of the religious principle in an individual, could be more fallacious, than the mere profession of belief, or an intellectual assent to the doctrines of the New Testament. That profession, on the part of the individual, allowing it the whole value of sincerity, cannot, at any rate, be taken to imply more than is intended to be expressed by it; and as it is not every *kind* of belief in christianity, that constitutes a man a true christian, the general avowal will be significant of nothing decisive with regard to the religious character. The profession of religion, for we take it as an admitted point that the church of Christ must be composed of persons professedly religious, involves something more than an assent to the truth of the christian system, because that does not constitute religion. True religion is the principle of devout belief rendered visibly operative in the character; and the profession of reli-

gion must surely bear some relation to the thing professed: it must include some expression of character." p. 22, 23.

"Unless some peculiarity of character is to be considered as distinguishing the professed disciples of Jesus Christ, and as forming the basis of the organization of the visible fellowship of believers, we can conceive of no moral end that the outward profession of christianity can answer. Nor should we then be able to discern any propriety in the language of the New Testament, in reference to the relative duties and spiritual privileges of the christian body. In a church constituted on the broad principle of national profession, no selection of character, no discipline, no communion of feeling, could possibly be maintained. No general character could so pervade the heterogeneous aggregate, as that it should form, in any degree, an exhibition of the peculiar genius and tendency of christianity. The existence of such a society in the world, would be a fact wholly unimpressive; it would convey no instruction, communicate no influence; nay, since that which is undistinguishable is to us the same as invisible, unless some ritual or political frame-work were super-added to the circumstance of profession, the very existence of this visible church would soon become problematical. The church and the world, as there would no longer exist between them any contrast or opposition, would soon be considered as convertible terms." p. 25, 26.

Having shown at some length, that the very idea of christian profession involves a wide distinction from the world; and having stated what it must involve to render it valid, he comes to treat of the visibility of such profession in an associated form, or what has been termed the *visible church*, and very ingeniously traces the downward steps, that were actually taken, from the genuine scriptural notion of a spiritual unity, to a spurious visibility, or that most pestilent notion of *uniformity*, as an essential ingredient in unity, which has been the *ignis fatuus* of superstitious princes, and of worldly priests, from the days of Constantine down to our own. This fatal contrivance, dragged into the church by her infatuated sons, has been a *Trojan horse* within the spiritual city, promising peace and security, but actually proving the prolific source of more desolation to the inhabitants of Zion, than the Grecian device to their unsuspecting victims. The origin of this deadly principle,—a principle still maintained in various gradations of extravagance, by all endowed and established churches, is to be found in that corrupt notion of *visibility*, which the church of Rome has carried to the highest pitch of perfection, absurdity, and impiety. Mr. Conder has admirably traced the operation of this notion, in those corruptions of christianity, which substituted a vi-

sible for a spiritual glory, and but too successfully assimilated, in the minds of the people, the sublime and simple institutions of Christ, to the vanities and abominations of heathen idolatry.

" The notion of a visible catholic church, as a political institution, was the offspring of that monstrous system of errors, which so soon began to overspread the church of Christ; after its alliance to secular power, and which ended in nearly extinguishing the light of christianity. The church of Rome dealt largely in visibilities. It had a visible head, and therefore a visible unity under that head; visible altars, visible sacrifices; it made the Saviour visible; nay, it ventured so far in impiety, as to represent in the paintings which adorned its temples, the Deity himself as visible. Nor was it to the sense of sight only that it sought to accommodate spiritual realities. That which was not visible, was made palpable; prayers were consolidated into beads, grace was poured out in the form of oil or water, merit was an article of merchandise, faith was bestowed as a gratuity before reason could appreciate the gift, and the very body and blood of Christ were substantially imparted in the Eucharist. Under pretence of enlisting the senses in the service of faith, it converted religion itself into sensuality. Nothing could be better adapted to the prejudices of the heart, than the Romish superstition, which systematically compromised the spiritual for the sensible, connected the associations of taste with the impressions of sense, only to make those impressions the more captivating and delusive; and by combining them with false notions of religion, and with that instinctive sort of devotion, which readily attaches itself to an indefinite object, effectually excluded from the mind all appropriate ideas of the invisible realities to which pure faith and spiritual worship have reference, and chained the immortal principle to semblances and shadows. Thus did the church of Rome revenge the cause of the demon gods, whose lying oracles the new religion had silenced, whose very temples it had usurped, by converting christianity itself into a system of more refined but scarcely less impious idolatry." p. 38-40.

It was at the moment when this half-spiritual, half-carnal notion of a visible church embodied itself in the conception of uniformity,—a uniformity extending to the most minute observances, that birth was given to that monstrous brood, partaking of the nature of the vulture and the serpent, which required only the feverish incubation of spiritual ambition in the nest of power, to bring them forth into the most deadly activity. What, at its origin, were the effects of this malignant principle, is well known to most of our readers. It fell with the horrors of the most desolating tempest upon the vineyard of the Lord. In our own country, even in protestant times, though it has not visited us in the impetuosity and fierceness of the tempest, it has been a blighting mildew upon the

fairest and tenderest plants. No splendors of piety, no pre-eminence of talents, no measures of usefulness, have availed for protection from its cankering and burning power. It has been to enforce such uniformity, that the authority of the church has been called in; but the authority of the church has been construed to mean the authority of the state. Thus secular power has been employed, with the aid of the glittering sword, to compel those whom the powerless croiser could not draw. The vain boast (would it had been only vain) of the authority of the church, has been pleaded, to justify measures subversive of liberty of conscience, and utterly antichristian in their origin and their tendency; and from the days of Constantine downward, the fiery flying serpents both of papal and protestant uniformity, have possessed nearly equal malignity. All the controversies which have rent the church, and many of the desolations that have overspread the fairest kingdoms of the world, have had their origin, and drawn their virulence from this very source, — *the authority of the church exacting uniformity*. Even among the sons of the reformation, there are yet three fundamental questions, relating to this subject, upon which they have a broad and angry schism among themselves: 1st, as to who are the persons that constitute the church itself; whether the whole nation, the parliament, the king, the clergy, the bishops, or each society of believers? 2dly, whether the church, upon whatever definition of it you assume, has authority from Christ to decree the observance of any rites, ceremonies, or modes of worship, not expressly enjoined by scripture? 3dly, whether the church may employ, supposing she possess any, and if any, what degree of secular sanction, in the form of either civil privation, or punishment, to secure obedience to its decisions, and promote uniformity throughout the visible church?

It is, as Mr. Conder clearly shows, in a mistaken conception of uniformity, as constituting, or as promoting unity, and in the unallowed attempt to enforce such uniformity, by measures, and to an extent, utterly unjustifiable, that established churches in general have lost sight of the essential nature of the church of Christ, the nature of its unity, and the only species of visibility of which that unity is susceptible. He contrasts with the low and superficial notion of unity contained in uniformity, the scriptural delineation of the exclusively spiritual nature of the whole economy of the gospel, and comes to consider, in the last section of the first book, "the essential unity of the church of Christ, the

*basis of union* ; that is, of a visible union among its members. From his principles upon this point, though they are not new, we do not see how any genuine believer can consistently dissent. Mr. Conder's views of union are liberal and scriptural: they have our most decided approbation. We believe them, indeed, to be the only ground upon which any thing like a broad and lasting reconciliation will ever be effected among the members of the great christian family. They are views of the utmost importance to the glory of the church; and they are vitally connected with the first principles of nonconformity. The following passages deserve universal attention, for the liberality of the principles they exhibit; principles, indeed, which, in a recent treatise, Mr. Conder found ready to his hand, glowing in all that vigour and beauty, with which they have been clad by an intellect as powerful as it is splendid; principles which will bear the strictest scrutiny, and which, hereafter, in the second pentecost of the church, will be happily and universally triumphant.

"That which forms the basis of christian union, is, a spiritual identity of nature and of character. In the following respects true christians cannot differ:

"1. As the real existence of the religious principle, how different soever the degree of its prevalence. Faith is that principle of spiritual life, which constitutes an individual a member of the true church of Christ.

"2. As to the origin of this principle in the heart: for what diversities soever of operation may be apparent, it is 'the same God who worketh all in all.' The existence of religious faith can be ascribed only to one efficient cause, the divine agency on the heart; and the results of that divine operation must be of a uniform character.

"3. As to those essential doctrines, a belief in which forms the basis of the exercise of the religious principle, as well as the appropriate evidence of its reality. 'Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.' On this chief corner-stone 'God's building' must rest. 'For every spirit that confesseth the Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and whosoever confesseth that Jesus Christ is the son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.' This is the foundation of faith, and the exercise of christian charity can have no different standard. The term of christian communion ought, so far as possible, to be determined by the terms of salvation." p. 56, 57.

"If, in these respects, and in these respects alone, the unity of the church of Christ forbids the possibility of an essential difference among its members, those subordinate diversities which do not interfere with their spiritual relation to each other as constituting one body, ought not to form any bar to their recognizing each other under this character, as belonging to the visible

fellowship of believers. On all points of an extrinsic or circumstantial nature, things superinduced upon christianity, or which attach to it merely as the deductions of human opinion, the church of Christ may be externally divided without schism, may admit of diversity without disunion. No inconvenience can result from the disagreement, so long as the disagreement or diversity is tolerated. It is the attempt to reconcile, by unhallowed means, this difference of opinion, by forcing men to agree; the attempt, in fact, to do that which being impossible to be done it cannot be necessary it should be done, and if not necessary, all pretence for attempting it as a thing expedient or desirable is taken away; it is the imposition of other tests of union than those which have a relation to the essential unity of the church: it is these which are the original source of all the mischiefs charged upon diversity of religious opinion. The evil may in short be traced up to this simple circumstance—intolerance armed with power. Differences of opinion are not the cause, they are only the pretence of intolerance; but what gives venom and energy to intolerance, is ambition; and what makes ambition dangerous, is secular power. By this means inroads have been made by worldly policy into the spiritual kingdom of Christ, and the boundary of separation between the church and the world has been, as a natural consequence, practically involved in utter obscurity. To resist this unhallowed usurpation is a duty resulting from our allegiance to the 'One Lord' of the church; and it is enforced by every consideration that respects the spiritual integrity and unity of that church which 'He hath purchased with his own blood.' " p. 58, 59.

Book II. is on church government. The first chapter, which treats of laws in general, displays considerable judgment, particularly in tracing the distinction between human and divine legislation. Some parts of this chapter are equal in philosophical acuteness, and in logical accuracy, to any in the whole performance.

Considering LAW as emanating from superior will, he aims to show, that there can be no laws of valid obligation in religious concerns, but such as originate with the Divine Being, and which imply both the power and the right in the legislator, of rendering them efficient. No such superior will is possessed by one human being over another; no power of controlling the religious principle is possessed by man, and hence the assumption of a legislative power, over the religious principle in man, by any mortal, is an impious invasion of the divine prerogative; and that to yield obedience to those who claim such authority, is to submit both the intellectual and moral character to a most baleful influence. We only regret that his disquisition upon this topic is so short, and that several important points are touched only slightly. It is a profound, but highly interesting inquiry,

and one which, in our opinion, notwithstanding all that has been written upon it, still demands the service of some acute and highly gifted mind, to bring out its essential principles, in all their power, and in all their bearings. The necessary limitations of human or civil legislation might have been extended, particularly in reference to the intellectual faculty. The following extract will, however, afford a fair specimen of the very able manner in which he has treated the subject, as far as he has gone, and serve as a clue to the general principles laid down.

" Laws, it must ever be remembered, do not in themselves partake of the nature of *inducement*; they furnish neither motives nor the power to obey: they are only rules of action. Law may be considered as a light thrown upon the path of duty. Its influence on the character is derived from the sanctions by which it is enforced; these furnish the inducements to obedience. The ultimate sanction of human enactments is force, and that which force cannot restrain or compel, the law of man is obviously incompetent to enact. The penalties attached to human laws respect the social interests or the social existence of man: there the utmost vindictive severities of the law must terminate. The sanctions of the divine laws respect a future state of being; they address the fears of man through the medium of faith; they consist not of arbitrary enactments, but of consequences inevitably resulting, in the nature of things, from wilful opposition to the perfections of God, and the moral order of the universe; they regard man not in any social relation, but in that only essential relation of his being which he sustains to his Maker. These circumstances form but a small part of the contrast between divine and human legislation."

p. 73, 74.

" The principles, then, of moral discipline, and of social government, are altogether dissimilar. Moral obligations cannot originate with man, and cannot be enforced by the ultimate sanctions of political rule. Compulsion is wholly foreign from a system which regards men as rational and accountable agents, because outward force cannot act as a motive upon the conscience. Political rule is substantially a delegated power; it is founded on a conceded superiority, by which a certain portion of individual liberty is compromised for the general weal. But no one is at liberty to concede a superiority of a legislative nature to another in matters of religious duty, or to surrender any portion of that moral freedom which is the basis of accountability. Power in relation to conscience, cannot be delegated: the will of another cannot become our law; the usurpation is impiety. The free agency of man not only involves a sacred unalienable right which the magistrate cannot lawfully infringe, but it imposes upon every individual a duty from which there is no discharge. There may be a public will: a public conscience is a monstrous chimera. A sense of personal responsibility lies at the foundation

of all religion, and in proportion as this sense is awakened in the minds of men, they become excited to think and to act as moral beings. Whosoever tends to weaken this consideration, by leading them blindly to confide in the professed guidance of others, has the most baneful effect upon the intellectual character." p. 75, 76.

It is to this guidance, under the imposing epithet of the authority of the church, that a large proportion of the professed christian community have been yielding a deference due only and pre-eminently to the authority of Christ. It has announced itself, indeed, to be the representative of his authority; but, like all human representations of spiritual things, it has usurped the place of the spiritual object itself, and has become as pernicious an idol in protestant churches, as ever was crucifix, or image, or picture, in papal Rome. The grounds upon which such authority has been claimed, the tendency which it has always manifested, and the effects in which it has invariably issued, sufficiently show, that it is neither for the edification of the church, the conversion of unbelievers, nor the glory of the Redeemer. The leading pretence on which the exercise of it has been justified by the heads of the episcopal church, is the expediency, for the sake of the church's peace and "godly discipline," of some final decision. It is pleaded, there is the kingly authority in states, the parental in families, and in all secular and voluntary associations, there are laws, and a head, or president, charged with the execution of these laws. This authority, it is said, is conceded to the spiritual rulers of the church, is involved in the pastoral relation, and is implied in scripture, when it is said, " submit yourselves to them that have the rule over you." Now it is readily admitted, that, in all associations, there is a bond of union; but then that bond is appropriate to the nature of such association; and hence the obligations to submit are to be sought in the very nature and principles of the association itself. Let not the authority of the church be argued from imperfect analogies; for no analogy can be formed between it and the royal or paternal authority, since the relations included in these terms have no affinity whatever to the nature of the christian church, however they might accord with the Mosaic economy. The reasons and the nature of both these species of authority, are to be sought, the one in the civil compact, the other in natural reason and affection; but as the church of Christ has nothing to do, either with the regal or the parental authority, but originates exclusively in revelation, and not in any purely natural principles, let the grounds of church authority,

and the whole detail of spiritual duties and obligations, be sought in the same source. The origin, the nature, and the bonds of our spiritual association into a fellowship of believers, absolutely require this. The institution of the church is not of man; the efficient principles of its unity are not of human invention; the sublime ends of its existence can be adequately comprehended and perceived in their whole length and breadth only by its Divine Founder; and for this reason, no other mind is capable of deciding what shall subserve the extended interests of the church; and hence it becomes highly questionable whether the officious intrusion of human skill, to perfect what is supremely the *workmanship of God*, and what was from the first intended to be entirely a *spiritual house*, may not rather deface and deform, than add any thing either to its security or its embellishment. It was upon this ground that the reformers proceeded to cut the sinews of that usurped and impious authority, by which the church of Rome had for ages maintained her preposterous domination. It is only by the sword of the Spirit that the church of England professes to have effected her excision from the corrupt stock of Rome; yet she is compelled to resort to weapons of another description, in repelling the attacks of nonconformists. It is with gross inconsistency that she violates all her own fundamental principles; and in her turn vaunts a divine authority to decree rites and ceremonies, and settle matters of faith. 'How decree, and how settle?' retorts the nonconformist; 'surely not so as to imply any obligation to submit; and surely not to decree any rite, or settle any controversy which the scripture has left unsettled?'—If you pretend to such an authority over me, my exclusive deference to the authority of the New Testament compels me utterly to disclaim it, and refer you for the most ample justification of my dissent from your principles, to your own ablest defenders of your own nonconformity to the decrees and decisions of the original patentees and inventors of this favourite doctrine.' It is upon this unanswered, and we think we may presume, *unanswerable* argument, that nonconformity rests. She stands here upon an impregnable rock. It is a noble and dignified elevation: the high ground on which genuine protestantism stood at first, and from which, as long as she is consistent, she will not come down a single step. It is the supreme and adequate authority of revelation. But on this rock the nonconformist stands, though unassailable, yet alone; and with his retention of this important position, the sublime cause of

CONG. MAG. NO. 11.

mental and spiritual freedom must stand or fall.

We have dwelt longer on these fundamental views than we intended, or than it will be necessary to do on most of the remaining parts of the work.

Chapter ii. of this second book, treats of the *law of admission*. Several of the sections of it are written with considerable precision and force. After considering the import of the term *church*, the origin and independence of such associations, our author advances to detail what he considers the essential conditions of initiation. 1st, The voluntary act of the candidate. 2ndly, The absence of compulsory obligation on the church. 3rdly, That exclusion is no infringement of *social rights*. 4thly, Qualifications in the candidate, corresponding with the design of the association; after exhibiting their qualifications from the apostolic history of the first churches, he says:

"Religious character was the indispensable, and it may be as truly affirmed, the sole pre-requisite to christian communion.

"Who then can be authorized to introduce any change in the essential laws and constitution of the churches of Christ? To institute other terms of communion, or to dispense with these qualifications, by compulsory statutes, which supersede and preclude all selection founded on discrimination of character? Why should it be deemed unlawful for christian men to associate together on the very same principles as those on which the primitive churches were established, to employ the very same means in order to their formation that the apostles employed—the preaching of the word, and to attempt to realize those spiritual objects which they had exclusively in view? Of this alone are nonconformists guilty, in declining submission to the claims of ecclesiastical establishments." p. 97.

He then enters, in connexion with this subject, upon an examination of religious tests, and goes through the several tests adopted by the church of England,—the creeds and articles. Through this branch of his argument we need not follow him, but yet must be allowed to pronounce, generally, our approbation of his candid and judicious observations on the nature and tendency of the tests still in use. There remain many parts of his work, on which we should have offered some observations, had we not already enlarged beyond our ordinary limits. We shall, however, content ourselves in our next number with a mere analysis of the remaining chapters of the second, and the whole of the third book, that we may reserve a little space for a few remarks on the execution of the fourth and last book, on Ecclesiastical Establishments.

(To be continued.)

*Sermons, preached in the Parish Church of High Wycombe, Bucks, by the Rev. Charles Bradley. London, Longman and Co. &c. 8vo. 10s. 6d.*

THE advice which ministers have frequently received, to publish the thoughts which they deem calculated to benefit mankind in any other form than that of sermons, is not likely soon, if ever, to be followed: and before we charge those who refuse to follow it with a proud defiance of critical judgment, or a perverse disregard to public opinion and taste, it may be well to ask, whether it be quite so easy as some of their censors and advisers have appeared to imagine, for them to mould and print their conceptions in a form materially different from that in which they originally composed and delivered them. It is a well known fact, that they who have accustomed themselves to appear before the public as historians, biographers, poets, or even essayists, have proportionably declined in the qualifications requisite for the pursuit of a stated, public, evangelical ministry: and on the other hand, that those who have cultivated with the greatest care the talents necessary to fill the pulpit with credit and success, have appeared from the press to considerable disadvantage in any other form than that in which they appear every week, and sometimes almost every day, before their congregations. That some of the former class have gained themselves distinction by the publication of what they have called sermons, we readily admit; but we beg leave to ask, whether they have not generally mistaken the nature, and misapplied the name, of their productions? Whether such productions have not, almost without exception, been much more suited to the chair of the professor, and the service of the college, than to the pulpit of the evangelist, and the edification of the church? We are also ready to admit, that some of the latter class have obtained celebrity by works of a very different appellation and design to that of sermons; but we ask again, whether such works have not shown, through all attempts to conceal it, that their authors were much better sermonizers, than they were ever likely to become biographers, historians, or poets. We have in our "mind's eye" at this moment individuals of living celebrity, who shine through the medium of the press in no other character than that of preachers, whose efforts to instruct the public by printing, should be confined to the publication of sermons, and who should be advised to make no attempt to mould their sermons into any other form, either to propitiate the tri-

bunal of criticism, or to gratify the taste of the public.

The author of the volume before us, will do well not to divert his mind in the smallest degree from an employment, in which, as it regards both talent and disposition, he is evidently at home, — that of writing sound, impressive, and useful sermons. His work displays no depth of learning, nor brilliancy of imagination; it contains no fine-turned periods, nor polished sentences; it exhibits no sparklings of wit, nor fire of genius; but it has qualities of much greater importance to a public teacher of the gospel, and of more certain value and lasting utility to those who wait upon his instructions. Mr. Bradley is always in earnest. His fervent spirit labours, by "thoughts that breathe, and words that burn," to affect his audience in favour of "the things that belong to their peace." He seldom occupies much more than half the space of a sermon in explaining the meaning of his text, and discussing the nature of his subject; and during this stage of his progress, he discovers, by frequent appeals to the consciences of his hearers, his anxiety to arrive at a favourite point, from which he is resolved to convince them, by as clear and pressing an application as possible, of their immediate and eternal interest in the whole affair. We give the following specimens from the first two sermons. Referring to the description of glorified saints, given by a venerable inhabitant of heaven to the beloved disciple, — "These are they who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" — Mr. Bradley remarks :

"Ten thousand tears of penitence could not have washed them white, nor the blood of martyrdom concealed their stains. How then was their filthiness removed? By the water of baptism! They were indeed washed in this water, but it was not this that purified their souls. Daily experience and observation prove that no outward means can remove the stain of sin. While we are contending that baptism has this power, thousands around us, who have been baptised in the name of Christ, are giving a death blow to all our reasoning by their worldly and ungodly lives. This and every other ordinance is sometimes made the means of communicating blessings to the soul; but there is no inseparable connexion between the outward visible sign, and the inward spiritual grace. A man may go to the table of the Lord, and yet not discern the Lord's body; he may be washed with the water of baptism, and yet be in 'the gall of bitterness, and the bonds of iniquity.' Could we but once be brought, my brethren, to see something of the real nature and extent of the depravity which reigns within us, we should then very moment be convinced that no outward ordinances, no

animal exertions, can cleanse us from its pollution; that the evil is too powerful, and too deeply seated, to yield to such remedies as these. Our feelings would at once refute the most subtle reasonings." p. 9, 10.

Again, from the same text, referring to the worship which is offered in heaven, our author observes:—

" If then we have no taste for these things; if the service of God is wearisome to us; if the blessedness resulting from it has no power to delight us; from what unknown source do we expect to derive that fulness of joy for which we hope in heaven? Of what river of pleasure do we expect to drink? There are no sensual delights to be found within its courts. The harp and the viol, the tabret and the pipe, and the wine, are in none of its feasts. The mirth of these things has ceased; all earthly joy is darkened; and the pleasures of the world are gone. The heaven of the Bible is not a Mahometan paradise; it is a Christian temple, and all the joys it has to communicate must be found in its pure and spiritual services, and in the smiles of its God. It has no other blessedness to boast of, no other pleasures to bestow. We must either find happiness in these things, or all will be dreariness and gloom. Let its everlasting doors be opened to us, and, amidst the rejoicing of angels and saints we shall be wretched, and sigh for the enjoyments of the earth we have left." p. 40.

We introduce the following extract, because we deem it a seasonable and important, as well as a well-written, admonition.

" The sacrament of the Lord's supper is designed, not to blot out our iniquities, but to remind us of a dying Saviour: and yet from this ordinance many of us can often turn away without a struggle, and without a sigh. What does this conduct prove? Our humility? The tenderness of our conscience? Alas, brethren, it proves much more clearly that the dying request of a crucified Redeemer is forgotten and despised. We do not so treat a departed parent and a friend. Their last requests are treasured in the memory, and we almost dread to violate or neglect them. How is it then that Jesus only is despised, when he says, ' This do in remembrance of me?' There is reason to fear that we must find an answer to this inquiry, not in a tender conscience, but in a cold, careless, worldly heart. There the evil lies, and there the remedy must be applied." p. 15, 76.

We heartily wish that those preachers, whose zeal for the doctrines of grace obscures their moral perceptions, and blinds them to " the holiness of truth," could be brought to shape their distorted minds to something like the following thoughts and questions.

" Was then Peter singled out (to receive the news of the Saviour's resurrection) on account of his peculiar guilt? God forbid. Never let us attempt to magnify the grace of God, by making that abominable thing which he hates a recommendation to his favour. It is true that

he is ready to pardon the greatest, the vilest sinner, who really seeks his pardon; it is true that he has sometimes shown the riches of his grace by making a heinous sinner a holy saint: but are we therefore to sin that grace may abound? Does the greatness of the sinner's guilt plead with the greatness of divine mercy? No: sin may draw down vengeance from heaven on the sinner's head, but it can never draw down mercy and grace." p. 102.

" O could the afflicted Jacob, the mourning David, the dying Moses, the weeping Peter, hear some modern professors of the gospel speak of that bitter thing, which planted so many stings in their hearts, and drew down so many sorrows on their heads, how would they wonder and tremble!" p. 108.

Our readers will readily suppose the author of these extracts to be capable of clearly understanding, and of fully appreciating and explaining, the humility which led the Apostle Paul to declare himself " less than the least of all saints." From the sermon on this text, the seventh in the volume, we should gladly extract several interesting passages, did not our contracted limits forbid; and the uniform excellence of the discourse incline us rather to recommend those who have opportunity carefully to peruse the whole.

In the sixteenth sermon, Mr. Bradley has, with becoming zeal, combated the sentiments which would limit the virtue and value of the Redeemer's sacrifice, upon the ground of its partial application, and reception among men.

" It is plain that there may be treasures in the mines of the earth sufficient to enrich all who live on it, and yet but few of the inhabitants of the earth may be enriched by these treasures. And it is not equally possible that there may be undiscovered riches in Christ, sufficient to save a universe of sinners, though many despise his salvation and perish? Is the balm of Gilead unable to heal, because the wounded sufferer refuses to have it applied? Shall the deep and overflowing river of life be said to be empty, because we refuse to drink of its waters, and perish with thirst? Is the Holy One of Israel to be limited, because his creatures, poor contempt upon the glories he offers them, and choose instead of them the pleasures and wages of sin? As well might a man contend that the sun has ceased to shine around him, because he closes his eyes against its light, or that food is unable to support his body, because he refuses to receive it. The sufficiency of a remedy to remove an evil is one thing; the application of the remedy to that evil is another." p. 317, 318.

In closing our review of Mr. Bradley's volume, we are

" Still pleased to praise, but not afraid to blame."

With all its excellence and value, it is not a faultless production. The sentiments require neither apology nor qua-

ification, and its tone and spirit leave us nothing to wish; but its style is capable of considerable amendment: it is frequently verbose, and sometimes a little too familiar, without deriving from that familiarity any addition of clearness and simplicity. A few expressions, likewise occasionally occur, which, though in common hackneyed use, do not properly convey to the mind of a stranger the notions which those who are in the secret, are accustomed to associate with them. We say these things solely for Mr. Bradley's advantage, and as his good sense will instantly perceive the sources of our complaint, we shall not lengthen our critique by exposing these sources to our readers. The splendid list of subscribers to this work must already have exhausted the first edition; and if in a second the pious and intelligent author avails himself of our hints, our end in giving them will be fully answered.

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*Letters during a Tour through some Parts of France, Savoy, Switzerland, Germany, and the Netherlands, in the Summer of 1817.* By Thomas Raffles, A. M.

A traveller in Greece, without taste, or in America, without science, could not more effectually mortify the literary world by his insane notes, than a continental tourist, without piety, disappoints and grieves the religious world by his mistakes and misrepresentations. Science is not more essential towards an interesting view of nature, than piety towards a useful view of man; for it is as impossible, without *spiritual discernment*, to distinguish and group human character accurately, as to enrich the annals of philosophy or literature, without the pre-requisites of talent and education. The shades of difference between the characters of nations, and the singularities of individuals, will, indeed, be as obvious to an ungodly man, as the distinctions of climate and natural aspect. We may as easily perceive an unusual depth of moral degradation, as a Dutch swamp; and be equally alive to a bold virtue, as to an Alpine scene. These are matters of course, and naturally strike him by their extreme departure from what he has been accustomed to at home. But as to analysing the character of nations, or exposing the moral causes which formed and fixed its peculiarities, he is utterly incompetent, having neither the *fact* nor the scriptural knowledge required for the process. To us, therefore, (and we are not singular in our taste,) a traveller not "*mighty in the scriptures*," nor spiritual in his feelings, is as uninteresting in his passage through society, as one without botany

on the Alps, or without classical knowledge at Athens. Owing to this habit of thinking, (and it is a confirmed one,) we have done little more than glance at the muster roll of modern tourists; and this has been enough; for their names, like that of *ABIGAIL'S HUSBAND*, *Nabal*, showed there was nothing to be expected which could add to the sum of our practical knowledge, or devout feeling. In general, they have been "*without God*" in the continental "*world*," and in consequence of this, they have not seen it in the light of eternity. This is what we complain of, and we have as much right to complain on this account, as mere literary journalists, when "*blacktongued knaves*" set up for antiquarians and philosophers. The pompous pretensions of Squire O'Reilly, in regard to a north-west passage among the polar ice, are not rendered more contemptible from their being founded on a single voyage in a whaler, than the indefinite moralizing of modern tourists in the *Palais Royal*, and the church of *Notre Dame*. In both cases, there is a degree of ignorance which is intolerable on topics so momentous.

We anticipate the objection which such travellers would advance against this reasoning: it was not their object to furnish moral lessons to their readers; amusement, not instruction, was their aim. So much the worse. It is sheer impertinence, after the public are familiar with dates, distances, aspects, and antiquities, &c. &c., to repeat them anew, however well told as to manner. For, except the improvements made by Buonaparte during our exclusion from the continent, we knew all this before, and certainly paid enough for his overthrow, without being taxed for the travelling expenses of every *Sterne* who kept a journal. We are not fastidious, but can laugh at *bon mots*, and even relax over the ordinary incidents of a tour. We could excuse the occasional introduction of a bill of fare, and set out both the breakfast and dinner of a traveller, were we certain that his recruited strength would be employed to some purpose worthy of an accountable being. But when all this patience and good humour is repaid by mere gossip, or the repetition of what we already know, we are indignant. And not less so, when we are dragged along promenades of folly, haunts of vice, and dens of superstition, which the writer neither exposes with moral effect, nor censures with moral feeling. Now we have been so often mortified by such treatment, that we came to the resolution of perusing no more tours, until they were commended to our notice by a name which should of itself be a guarantee for moral discrimination, and spiritual

taste. Such a name stands on the title page before us, and such a character pervades Mr. Raffles's little volume of letters. While it gratifies curiosity by its incident, and taste by its descriptions, it affects by the very mode of conveying information: awaking gratitude by its minute comparisons, and pity by its moral pictures. Without being less entertaining or lively than its contemporaries, it turns both scenes and events to some practical purpose; either endearing home at every step, or suggesting plans of usefulness for abroad. And all this in such a degree, that we have almost forgotten our disappointment on finding that *Sir T. S. Raffles*, in whose company the tour was made, and to whom it is dedicated, furnishes none of the materials. We have such an opinion of that governor's good sense, philanthropy, and political knowledge, that our fondness betrayed us into the expectation of meeting with some specimens of his sagacity and foresight, while he surveyed the effects of a policy so foreign to his own. Not that we blame his silence if he hazarded no opinion, nor that of his amiable relative if he did: the official capacity of the former imposed reserve, and the good sense of the latter is too great and delicate to betray confidential remarks.

Among the many things which render this little volume interesting, and worthy of being introduced into families, it is not the least, that the letters are written to a lady, and, as we suspect, to Mrs. Raffles. This naturally imparts to them a degree of pleasing tenderness, and softened energy, which nothing else could have produced; because every object being surveyed, and sketched, for the express purpose of gratifying the object dearest to the writer, and of compensating for his absence, his feelings could neither be dull, nor his language tame. This, we apprehend, is the secret of that *tact* in seizing upon the finer beauties of nature, and of that success in depicting them, which characterise the descriptive parts of this volume. We should not have presumed to throw out this hint, did not our motives justify our freedom. We wish that the work before us should displace some of the other tours we have seen in religious families. It contains at least equal information, and surpasses them all in its tendency. In proof of assertions, we appeal to the following extracts. Among the sculptures of the Louvre, Mr. Raffles reflects thus:

" Part of the ground-floor of the Louvre is devoted to the specimens of ancient sculpture, of which there is an immense collection, many of them most exquisite, and some of colossal size. There is something awfully sublime in the im-

pression produced upon a contemplative mind, passing from hall to hall, and gallery to gallery, filled with these noble efforts of the human genius, wrested from the oblivion of long-departed years. As you enter every apartment, a new era of the history of the world seems to dawn upon you; and you find yourself surrounded by the most illustrious beings, by whose genius and actions it was distinguished and adorned. Centuries there dwindle into hours and minutes: you pass from age to age as you move from room to room; and, in the lounge of a morning, you seem to have communed with the greatest characters that have appeared upon the busy theatre of the ancient world."

p. 24.

Writing of the Picture Gallery, Mr. Raffles remarks in a similar tone:

" As you advance, the genius of every age and every nation of modern Europe appears to instruct, entertain, and delight you. You cease to regret the loss of men, who were the boast of their country, and the glory of their times; for here they survive, immortal in their works, while, by their magic power, the events of remote ages, and their illustrious dead, rise to meet your enraptured gaze, and look intently on you from the canvas they have made to live."

p. 56.

The letter in which these reflections occur, closes, as it ought, by an indignant burst of burning eloquence against "the accursed Charles IX."

" Nor could I forget, as I passed through his (the Louvre's) apartments, that round the walls of this very palace, now the peaceful retreat of genius, and the consecrated asylum of the arts, the groans of the dying PROTESTANTS arose to heaven for vengeance, through five successive days of massacre and blood; while ' Kill, kill,' was the incessant cry of the accursed Charles IX, who stood at the windows, a demon in a human form, to animate his ruffians when weary of their work, and fire upon the miserable fugitives that came within his reach. This carnival of death began the 24th of August, 1572; but the stain of it is indelible upon the cause that engendered, and the name that patronized it!"

We have put the word "*cause*" in italics, because we think Mr. Raffles uses it in the genuine sense—*POPEY*; and therefore we hope that "the indelible stains of this cause" will fix in his mind, and in the minds of others, who like him influence public opinion in large towns, an *indelible* resolution to oppose the growth of popery.

We had intended to give some specimens of the writer's excitement on viewing the Alps, but our limits forbid. It is, however, only justice to remark, that, amidst these magnificent scenes, he has written "as seeing the INVISIBLE," who "weighed the Alps in scales, and *Mont Blanc* in a balance."

The following lines afford no unfavourable specimen of his poetic talents.

"I saw the Alps,—the everlasting hills,—  
A mighty chain, that stretched their awful forms  
To catch the glories of the mid-day sun,  
And cast their shadows o'er the ' realms of  
moon.'

Yet, fair as fiction, 'twas an earthly scene,—  
A lovely portion of this lower world,  
By distance softened to the gazing eye.  
Some reared their points, and stretched their  
mighty length  
Like heaps of shadow from the abyss of night;  
And some like crysttal seas, and lakes of glass,  
Hung by Omnipotence in middle air,  
Appeared the boundary of this earthly scene.—  
This side the wondrous ocean, all was earth;  
Beyond, the aerial billows roiled and broke  
In gentle murmurs on celestial shores."

We conclude by again recommending this work to our readers, and to the author himself. To the former, it will afford pleasure; and to the latter, it will furnish much of the dull labour of correcting, in the event of a second edition, which is, we understand, forthcoming.

*Discourses on the Millennium.* By David Bogue. pp. 654. Hamilton, Paternoster Row.

We feel considerable difficulty in acceding to the propriety of a practice which seems to be rapidly gaining ground. We allude to the custom of preaching a series of discourses on general subjects, relating to christianity, before a miscellaneous audience, with a view to their future publication. We are perfectly aware of the double end obtained by this method: the hours allotted for the professional engagements of a minister, are filled up by the same portion of thought and study that enables him to appear before a much larger circle afterwards in print. But, we would ask, are there no opportunities hereby lost for the conversion of souls? Undoubtedly it is the great and principal end of the christian ministry to rouse the consciences of men, by a faithful representation of their individual guilt, to a salutary concern for their salvation; and to urge them forward by a display of the sanctions and motives of our holy religion, with invigorated step, in the path of evangelical obedience. But discourses of the kind we have alluded to, are little adapted for this purpose. They may be in general more correct, more close in argument, more stately in diction and language; but we cannot but fear, that much, very much, is sacrificed in point of effect, and of practical utility.

We must, however, except the volume before us from the full application of these remarks. The discourses it contains appear to have been delivered at considerable intervals, thus allowing

for the frequent introduction of other topics, better suited to the cases of a promiscuous audience. Nor would we overlook the situation of their author, as the president of a seminary where young men are trained to the noblest work that can present itself to the energies of the human mind. To *missionary* students, these "Discourses on the Millennium," if they had an opportunity of hearing them, must have been peculiarly acceptable, as relating to a subject beyond calculation interesting to them, and upon which it behoves them to be in possession of the clearest and fullest information.

As to the discourses themselves, we shall perhaps best discharge our duty by saying, that they are characterized by a freedom from most of the defects ordinarily attaching to works bearing upon the same topic. On no subject has the exercise of a sound and vigorous judgment been so imperiously demanded, or so rarely exhibited, as on the one upon which these discourses profess to treat. On what other topic, within the whole range of theological discussion, has a prudent imagination found such ample scope for its excursions and wanderings as upon this? In how many instances have the bold outlines of the Jewish prophets, respecting the "latter day glory," been filled up with the strokes and the colouring of a human fancy; and men have been called to look, not upon what shall be, according to the prediction of an unerring intelligence, but upon scenes that will have no other existence than in the reveries of devout and learned commentators. By some of these, we have been taught to expect, at the arrival of this period, a kind of heaven upon earth. Natural and moral evil are to lose their power to operate. Pain, sorrow, and misery, are to be banished from the globe; and mankind, prodigiously augmented in number, are to lose, in the character of saints, nearly every proof and vestige of their having been fallen creatures. We need not stay to specify the injury likely to accrue to religion from such representations, or rather misrepresentations, as these. They drive the object from our expectations, by rendering it difficult for our apprehensions to embrace it. By placing it out of the reach of probability, they paralyze the efforts that would otherwise be made for its attainment. We deem it, therefore, no mean praise to say of a volume, professedly devoted to this topic, that it is free from all these fictions of imagination, and that its author clearly prefers the sober colouring of truth and probability, to all the enchanting, but deceptive, hues of a lively and glowing fancy.

The Doctor has, judiciously we think

in the arrangement of the different branches of his subject, inverted the order of time, and begun by considering the probable state of the world during the millennium, and then the means and circumstances preparatory to its approach. The following is the order into which he has distributed the topics of the respective discourses, twenty in number:—“ Introductory remarks.—Superior degree of knowledge during the millennium.—Eminent holiness at this period.—The constitution and attributes of the millennial church.—Its external prosperity.—Universal peace at this period among the nations.—The happiness, as well as peace, of mankind at this time.—Moral means of introducing the millennium, (two sermons.)—Judgments introductory to it.—Attendant effusion of the Holy Spirit.—Progress of protestant churches from their present condition, towards this state.—Downfall of Antichrist.—Annihilation of infidelity.—Destruction of Mahometanism.—Conversion of the Heathen.—Calling of the Jews, (two sermons.)—Time of the commencement and the duration of the millennium.—Concluding remarks.”

The above syllabus, it will be seen, includes all the various branches of the topic under consideration, and furnishes abundant materials for patient investigation, and deep research.

In the discourses on the “moral means of introducing the millennium,” the author successfully combats the notion that miracles will be employed for this purpose. He shows that the preaching of the gospel, subsequent to the dispensation of miracles, has been the means of extending it over a far wider range of country, than it had ever been made to occupy by the exhibition of miracles the most stupendous. It was by this instrument, without the intervention of miracles, that the church was raised out of the darkness of anti-christian superstition, at the time of the reformation. And why may not the whole world be raised at length, by the same instrument, from the degradations and miseries of the fall, into a condition of moral order, where peace and love, where ardent zeal, and lively devotion, shall be the prevailing elements? We have only to realize the appearance in various parts of the globe of such men as Whitfield and Knox; men gifted with the same energies, and favoured with the same blessing from heaven on their labours; and miracles of no other order will be necessary for the cultivation, in a spiritual sense, of our whole species. Speedily may He, with whom is the residue of the Spirit, raise up multitudes of such men, and send them forth to their great and glorious work!

We extract the following paragraph from the above discourses, because of the honourable testimony it bears to an Institution which some have been weak enough to regard as the rival of the Missionary Society, but to which in fact it is nothing more than a splendid auxiliary.

“ To those benevolent individuals, who have published an edition of the Bible, in order to diffuse divine knowledge, whether in their own or in foreign tongues, the friends of religion are deeply indebted. From those societies which have long been established in our land, to circulate the Scriptures among the people, we will not withhold a very high degree of commendation,—a commendation heightened by the length of their existence. May they go on and prosper! But to the British and Foreign Bible Society, we assign the first place among institutions of this nature. Its object is more extensive than that of its predecessors; for it grasps in its arms the whole globe on which we dwell. For energy, it yields to none as its superior; and by its exertions, it has acquired a mass of patronage and support, unknown to any former institution which combined piety with benevolence. Blessings on the men who formed it, and by whose ardent zeal it has reached its amazing and venerated height! It has indeed done great things, great things at home;—but perhaps still greater things abroad. How many foreign societies has it brought into existence, by its example and influence! How many has it called into being, and nursed by its maternal aid,—which in their turn are enriching with the heavenly treasure the lands in which they are formed. The inhabitants of Iceland, and of South Africa,—the natives of China, and the colonies of Canada,—are reading the books of the British and Foreign Bible Society. And to its honour be it spoken, it purposed to do still greater things than these: it has solemnly vowed at the altar of God, not to cease from its endeavours, till there be not a nation upon earth but has the Bible in its native tongue. Prosper, O God, the work of its hands, and crown its efforts with success! To all its friends, I wish the best of blessings;—and I can wish nothing better than those blessings which their Bibles contain, and which they convey to those who read them, not as the word of man, but as the word of God, which worketh effectually in all them that believe;—and that believing, they may receive the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls.” p. 241, 242.

On the subject of the calling of the Jews, which occupies two discourses, we meet with some sensible remarks. We cannot, however, go with the author in the positive conclusion he forms respecting the return of the great mass of the Jews, after their conversion, to their own land. To us it weighs very little, that such is their own fond hope and expectation at the present day. The light under which they have been accustomed to interpret the predictions of their prophets, is of itself sufficient to

make us suspect the truth of any opinion they may advance upon the subject. But apart from any good end to be answered, at least as far as we can see, by such a residence in their own land, and apart from the miracles that must be wrought, in such a case, to restore it to its former fertility, it appears to us, that it would strongly militate against one declared end of their conversion; namely, the union at length of the two great divisions of mankind, in one fold under one shepherd. Most of the prophecies in the Old Testament that speak of their return, in the latter day, to their own land, contain phrases that cannot be interpreted in a *literal* sense, such as that they shall seek unto David their King, and worship David their Prince, &c. &c. Hos. iii. 5. Ezek. xxxvii. 25. It is fair therefore to understand the former part as importing nothing more than their restoration to privileges and dignities equal to those enjoyed by their ancestors, in their native country. In the few passages of the New Testament, which speak of their conversion, where all the imagery taken from their former condition is laid aside, no mention whatever is made of their return to their own land, in any other way than as a part of that universal church, which there is good reason to believe, at the blissful period to which we are approaching, will cover the whole earth. We have great pleasure, however, in laying before our readers what the Doctor says concerning the probable means of their conversion, and with which we entirely concur.

" By such means shall the posterity of Abraham be called into a state of subjection to the Messiah. You perceive they are all remote from carnal or worldly inducements, and calculated to influence the soul by the consideration of spiritual and eternal benefits only. Let this be ever kept in mind, for it is of high importance that it should. By the unbelief of the Jews, Christ has been dishonoured to a degree which no words can express: that he will therefore be honoured in the most distinguished manner in their conversion, it is most reasonable to conclude. But would it not greatly detract from the honour of Christ, if the Jews were to be bribed to receive the gospel; and were to become christians, in consequence of support or emolument being held out or given, to induce them to do so? Would not the glory of the Redeemer be also in some measure tarnished, if the children of Jews were taken away from their parents, to be instructed in the principles of the christian religion, because the father and mother were too hard-hearted to be influenced by it themselves? To teach Jewish children in good, but let the right of the parents, as well as their domestic relations still remain. I am confident that the only successful method for the conversion of the Jews will be to make them acquainted with the gospel, and to let them gain nothing by becoming

christians—but the salvation of their souls. In this way alone will it be evident to all, that their conversion does not spring from the love of the world, but from the love of Christ: and in this way will the Messiah who has been so long and so grossly dishonoured by their rejection of him, have that dishonour repaired by their unbought faith." p. 469, 570.

Our opinion of the work before us may be gathered from the remarks we have ventured to make upon it. We regret that more care has not been taken with the style. The author from his familiarity, it may be presumed, with the Roman tongue, has contracted a habit of inverting his sentences, which is by no means agreeable to an English ear, and which very frequently obscures and weakens his meaning. We refer to such passages as the following:—" As of old, the Jews under Moses, now the Gentiles under Christ, have borne the burden and heat of the day: them therefore honours, we may suppose, yet await—honours of a similar kind."—" Taken away the unbelief of the Jews shall be."—" Our exalted privileges let us diligently improve."—" There cannot a doubt be entertained," &c.

In the event of a second edition, the author will find many passages that require to be expunged, as too low for the dignity of his theme, and the general style of his work. We allude to such phrases as these:—" To enlighten a man's mind by throwing a Congreve rocket in his face," &c.—" In the millennium there will not only be many *hands*, but many *heads*."—" By such a proceeding, a stab is given to christianity under the *fifth rib*," &c. &c. &c. At page 273, we meet with an address to kings. The author introduces it with an intimation, not altogether consistent with christian modesty, that his work may find its way into *their* presence, and with an apology for the faithfulness of it, as coming from one " who is arrived at a period of life when thrones and crowns have lost all their charms; and when the riches, honours, and pleasures of this world are no longer the objects of warm desire." What ground there may be for the above intimation, and why the author should thus eulogize his own superiority to worldly allurements, we presume not to divine. Certainly we should have no objection to see this volume in the hands of all the kings of the earth; and we should hope that *every* faithful minister of Christ, whether *young* or *old*, no longer feels the " riches, honours, and pleasures of this world, objects of warm desire." We mention these things with the greatest good will to the author. They are blemishes which, on a revision of his work, he will no doubt observe and correct.

## RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

## I. STATISTICAL VIEW OF DISSENTERS IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

*Present State of DISSENTERS in BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, with some Historical Notices. — (Continued from page 554.)*

**WOOBURN.** — An Independent congregation. This village was, during the reign of popery, the residence of the bishops of Lincoln, who had a palace here, in which was a prison, called "Little Ease." Several pious individuals were at different times confined in it, and cruelly punished for their adherence to the protestant faith; particularly Thomas Chase, of Amersham, who died in this prison; and Thomas Harding, of Chesham, who was afterwards burnt at the stake.† The bishop's palace was, however, destined to be afterwards the habitation of one who cordially entertained the faithful ministers of peace. Philip, Lord Wharton, a man of illustrious memory, "was a faithful respecter, as well as the maintainer, and protector, of the reformed religion; and his mansion at Wooburn was opened as a dwelling and asylum to the ~~EJECTED~~ ministers of the word of God." There is every reason to believe that this nobleman greatly contributed to the success of the gospel, both in this village, and in the adjacent towns of Wycombe, Beaconsfield, Marlow, &c. His private chapel was opened for public worship, and was frequented by persons from all

\* It appears by some of the prints in Fox's Book of Martyrs, as well as from the narratives of the sufferings of the protestants, that in some of the prisons attached to the residences of the ecclesiastical dignitaries of England, the safe custody of the prisoners was not the sole object held in view, but that, in addition to the imprisonment, or safe custody of the person, there were stocks to confine the feet, and manacles for the hands; and that, not unfrequently, whippings were inflicted secretly, at the discretion of the ecclesiastical tyrant; hence probably these prisons took their designation of "Little Ease." One good effect, therefore, of that change in the constitution of this country, by which the church has been deprived of the power of lording it at her will over the king's subjects, is that even those unhappy persons who fall under the censure of the laws, have their sufferings simplified, and the measure of their punishments regulated by statute, and according to a judicial sentence pronounced in open court.

† See Fox's Martyrology, pages, 711 and 890.

CONG. MAG. NO. 11.

the country round. Some of the brightest luminarys of that day, who were retained by him as chaplains, under his privilege as a peer, preached to the listening throng, in this place, to their no small edification. Many of the poorer of his hearers he kindly entertained in his kitchen; according to tradition it was his practice to call out to the people of Wycombe, Beaconsfield, &c. to go into his kitchen and take some refreshment before their return. Although religion appeared to droop in Wooburn, after the death of Lord Wharton; yet it is pleasing to observe, that it has never since quitted the place. Some pious individuals remained to uphold the profession of it, among whom was the grandmother of the late Mr. Thomas Grove, who was for many years minister of Walsall, in Staffordshire. Subsequently we find many good people meeting together in the neighbourhood for prayer and expounding the Scriptures; one of these, Mr. Francis Blackwell, of Loudwater, was a man whose memory is cherished by the friends of religion in this neighbourhood with uncommon feelings of respect, because his occasional labours in preaching the gospel were crowned with great success. In the year 1768, Mr. GROVE, a native of this village, who had been destined to the church, and sent to college for education, was, with five others, expelled from Edmund Hall, not for swearing or drunkenness, or any immorality, but for a certain excess of piety from which some persons of high station portended mischief to the church. Their crime was nothing less, christian reader, than praying, reading and expounding the Scriptures in a private house;‡ On Mr. Grove's return to Wooburn after his expulsion, he commenced preaching in his own house, which soon becoming too small he fitted up one of his barns. This edifice was afterwards twice enlarged, and a new meeting has since been erected. This zealous and very successful servant of Christ laboured without hire for nine or ten years. Previous to his leaving Wooburn, he formed a church after the congregational model, and in the short time he was pastor of it received 69 members; out of which number six or seven remain to this day. Mr. Grove removed to Rotherham, in Yorkshire, and was succeeded by Mr.

‡ See a pamphlet entitled the Shaver, by Mr. M'Gowan; and another, entitled, *Pietas Oxoniensis*, by Mr., afterwards, Sir Richard Hill.

THOMAS ENGLISH, from Gosport. This laborious minister settled at Wooburn in 1778, and continued there till his death, which happened in 1809, having been pastor over this church 31 years. Besides Mr. English's labours in this place, he preached for several years at High Wycombe, where he formed a church. For many years before his death he became so infirm as to be unable to discharge *all* the duties of his office, and the people, greatly to their honour, obtained for him assistance from the academies. For several years Mr. G. SCOTT, now of Greenwich, was Mr. English's assistant. Several useful ministers have been sent out from this church; Messrs. Cooke, of Maidenhead; Griffin, of Portsea; Simmons, of Wigton; and Bristow, of Wilton.\* The present pastor, Mr. JOAHUA HARRISON, (late student at Hoxton,) was ordained March the 6th, 1811; and since that period many have been added to the church, and peace and unity continue to prevail in it. The meeting-house, which was erected in 1804, will seat 400, and is generally well attended. The church consists of above 100 members. The late Mr. Henry Revel, a deacon, gave 50l. to which were added two other sums; with these a cottage was purchased, and afterwards made into a comfortable residence for the minister, by the kind liberality of another very worthy deacon.

There are various benevolent societies connected with this place. A Sunday school of 120 children. Auxiliary collections for the Irish Evangelical, Hibernian, and Tract Societies. A yearly collection for the Missionary Society. A fund to assist the building of dissenting meetings. Subscriptions to enable the minister to relieve, when he visits the sick. A Dorcas Society. An annual contribution to the Bible Society; and, in connexion with the established church, there is a village school. Mr. Harrison preaches in five neighbouring villages; in each of which there is a good attendance.

As Lord Wharton has been particularly mentioned in the preceding account of Wooburn; the following further notices of that excellent nobleman may not be unacceptable.

Lord Wharton was undoubtedly a great friend to the nonconformists, and to all men of genuine piety. Two worthies of that honourable band, Mr. William Taylor, and Mr. Rowland Stedman, were his lordship's chaplains. Theophilus Gale travelled into France with two of his sons as their tutor. Lord Wharton was a friend to Thomas

\* See Memoirs of Mr. English, by Mr. Griffin.

Manton, D.D. and to John Owen, D.D. men whose names are imperishable. This latter celebrated divine wrote his last justly admired letter to his church, from the hospitable mansion of Lord Wharton, at Wooburn. Mr. John Rogers, after his ejection from Barnard Castle, was, by Lord Wharton, put into the rectory of Crogiew, in Cumberland, from which latter place, however, he was afterwards ejected. Lord Wharton also presented Mr. John Gunter to the church of Wadenden, in Buckinghamshire. Increase Mather, D.D. was much assisted by this worthy nobleman, and he interceded with King William on behalf of Mr. Richard Frankland. Mr. Matthew Towgood resided at Lord Wharton's house at his lordship's request. Cornelius Todd, through the kindness of this noble benefactor, lived at Heanor manor, near Tadcaster, and received eight pounds per annum during his life.†

Lord Wharton also gave, during his life-time, certain lands, the annual produce of which was to be laid out in the purchase of Bibles, to be distributed yearly, at different places in Buckinghamshire, Yorkshire, Durham, &c. Ten of those Bibles are now yearly given to the poor at Wooburn. Some elderly persons report that formerly the number was twenty, and that the condition on which these Bibles were given in former times, was, that the children should learn the Assembly's Catechism, and seven of the Psalms of David, by heart. Many are now living who received this bequest on that condition. The Bibles were formerly distributed by the Teadens and the Jefferies, both dissenters, and for several years by Mr. English, the dissenting minister. Mr. Phillips, principal of the Mill Hill school, when tutor of Rotherham Academy, obtained a sight of the deed of trust, and had a copy written from it, which he sent to Dr. Smith, of Herton, and we believe it is now with Ebenezer Maitland, Esq. M.P. It states that the Assembly's Catechism is that which is to be learned: there are other things in it with which churchmen cannot comply. But by some means the trust have of late years taken it out of the hands of dissenters, and have substituted the church catechism, for that of the assembly of divines. It is hoped this case will be investigated by the friends of religious liberty, and the guardians of the rights of dissenters. In Wooburn church there is a large mural monument of grey marble erected to the memory of that excellent nobleman, on which is the following Latin inscription:—

† See Nonconformists' Memorial.

S. P.

Domini Philippi Wharton baronis de Wharton quod reliquum est hic secundum Jesus Christi adventum praestolatus; qui prae nobili Whartoniorum in agro Westmorlandensi presapia oriundus, illius tandem extitit et haeres et decus:

Virtutem titulis, titulos virtutibus orans.

Ille nimis sexaginta tres plus, minus, annos in comitis proceres inter locum cum tenuit tum cohonestavit. Regiminis Anglicani civilis assertor strenuus, reformatio religionis tam fidelis cultor quam fautor, et patronus bonorum operum, justicie ac fidei vivæ et veræ exemplar, cuius aedes exultantibus V. D. ministris et hospitium patuerunt et asylum, quin et eginis et inopia laborantibus largius quotannis erogavit, et nobili exemplo amplasmatis rerum suarum partem novissimo testamento in vere pios usus erogandam mandavit. Sic vixit, et post varios pro Deo, patriæ, ecclesiæ exultatos labores placide in Christo obdormivit pridie nonas Feb. 1695, atatis sue præter proper 83.

**WYCOMBE HIGH, or CHIPPING.**—When the nonconforming clergy were ejected from the national religious establishment by the act of uniformity already frequently referred to, and commonly called the Bartholomew act, from the circumstance of its having taken effect on St. Bartholomew's day, 1662; the Rev. SAMUEL CLARK, A. M. formerly Fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge, removed to this place, where he preached frequently in a small house which is now private property. During his illness, or occasional absence, the people who attended his ministry repaired to Wooburn House, a distance of about four miles, where the excellent and pious Philip, Lord Wharton, as has been just stated, entertained them, and allowed them to worship in the chapel of his mansion. Mr. Clark\* "served God with great patience, self-denial, prudence, and peaceableness, unweariedly seeking the furtherance of his kingdom, when it was made very perilous to do so; and he died in great peace, serenity, and comfort, on the 24th of February, 1700–1, aged 75 years,† and was buried in the parish church of Wycombe. On the decease of Mr. Clark, the Rev. JOHN POWNALL became minister of the church then formed, of the Presbyterian order, and was ordained their pastor in 1702: he preached in the

same place which Mr. Clark occupied, till 1714, when the church and congregation, having considerably increased, erected the present commodious meeting house in Crendon Lane. It may truly be said, that "this temple was built in troublous times," for many of the intolérants threatened to destroy it, under the sanction of the schism bill, which passed in July, and the operations of which were to commence on the 1st of August of that year; but the death of Queen Anne, which happened on the morning of that very day, changed the face of affairs. Some time after the building of the meeting house, a dwelling-house, in the adjoining court, was given for the residence of the officiating minister. Mr. Pownall laboured with success during forty years, and died December 11, 1742, at the age of 79 years. He is described in a late epitaph on his tomb in Wycombe church yard, to have been "well versed in divine and human literature; an excellent orator, a faithful and vigilant pastor, distinguished indeed to admiration, and a pattern of piety."

On Mr. Pownall's death, the pastoral charge of the church was undertaken by the Rev. PETER BRADBURY,‡ who was descended from Sir Thomas Bradbury, Lord Mayor of London, A. D. 1500, and brother of the celebrated Thomas Bradbury who has been styled the patriarch of the dissenters. Mr. Peter Bradbury, resided principally at Hampden house, about eight miles from Wycombe, having intermarried with Isabella, daughter of Sir John Ely, of Nocton, in the county of Lincoln, Bart. and relict of the Right Hon. Richard Hampden, many years representative in Parliament, for the county of Buckingham. As much inconvenience was experienced by Mr. Bradbury residing at such a distance, it was agreed on, some time in the year 1748, to fix on a resident pastor, and the Rev. JOHN SMITHSON, a native of Yorkshire, became a probationer, and was solemnly set apart to the pastoral charge on the 9th of September, 1749. Mr. Price, Dr. Jenkins, and Messrs. Davis and Langford, assisting. Mr. Smithson continued to discharge the ministerial duties with fidelity and success, for a period of forty years, during the latter part of which he was subject to frequent attacks of gout, and often ascended the pulpit under great bodily infirmity. The first Lord's day morning, in the month of December,

\* An original portrait of Mr. Clark is in the possession of James Gomme, Esq. F.A.S. at Wycombe.

† Vide Palmer's Nonconformists' Memorial, vol. i. p. 226; and Biographical Dictionary, by Chalmers, vol. ix.

‡ Mr. Bradbury lies buried beneath an altar tomb at Little Missenden, in this county, with the following inscription: "Peter Bradbury, born August 26th, A. D. 1691; died April the 27th, A. D. 1754."

1788, he closed his labours by administering the ordinance of the Lord's supper to the people of his charge, after preaching to them from the 19th chapter of John, 30th verse:—"it is finished, and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." This was a solemn prelude to the event which not long afterwards (viz. on New Year's Day, 1789) transferred him from the church militant to the church triumphant. Mr. Smithson died unmarried at the age of 64 years, and was buried on the 7th of January, 1789, in the family vault of the venerable Mr. John Carter, who was deacon of the church upwards of half a century; and who closed a life of eminent devotedness to the best interests of religion, on the 5th day of December, 1817, aged 90.\* Mr. Smithson's funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. Joseph Brooksbank, on the 22d of February, in the year 1789. The Rev. WILLIAM MILLER, a native of Ross in Herefordshire, and who sometime preached at Woodbridge, in Suffolk, began his public ministry at Wycombe. He was unanimously called to take the charge of the church on the 9th of March following, and signified his acceptance on the 9th of the succeeding month, and he continued more or less to occupy the pulpit till the last Lord's day of the year 1812.

In the year 1779, there was a separation from the church and congregation at Crendon Lane; the seceders, who were by far the smallest portion, forming themselves into a small church, under the care of the Rev. Thomas English, already mentioned. He preached morning and evening at Wooburn, and at

\* See an interesting account of the longevity of this family in the obituary of the Gentleman's Magazine for December, 1817.

Wycombe in the afternoon, in a place which had been fitted up for the purpose. On August 2, 1801, the two churches were re-united, under the care of Mr. Miller, at Crendon Lane; and, in the early part of the year 1802, the Rev. SAMUEL HACKETT (now of Shepherd's Market) was chosen as an assistant minister, and the church was organized on the regular independent plan, on the 20th of July, in that year. Mr. Hackett removed to his present residence about four years after his first settlement here; and Mr. Miller resigned the pastoral charge on the 18th of January, 1807; but he continued to be morning preacher till the year 1812, as already stated. On the resignation of Mr. Miller as pastor, the Rev. ANDREW HORNE, late resident tutor at the Countess of Huntingdon's College at Cheshunt, undertook that office for a few months; but in the month of June, 1807, Mr. Horne, with part of the church and congregation, withdrew from Crendon Lane, and established themselves as a distinct church, in a different part of the town, where they still continue to worship.

On the 11th of April, 1808, the church in Crendon Lane, assisted by the advice of the Rev. Archibald Douglas, of Reading, and the Rev. Alexander Redford, of Windsor, made a more formal avowal of congregational principles than they had before done; and on the 11th of February, 1809, the Rev. Jacob Suelgar, formerly a student at Hoxton College, was called to the office of pastor, and ordained on the 17th of May following. He resigned that charge on the last Lord's-day in 1812, since which the Rev. WILLIAM JUDSON has occupied the pulpit, and continues the sole officiating minister.

(To be continued.)

## II. MISCELLANEOUS.

*Copy of a Letter from the Rev. H. Townley, of Calcutta, to a gentleman of Sandwich.*

Calcutta, 80 Dhurum Tuliab,  
3rd of November, 1817.

My dear Friend;—Refreshing to my spirits was your kind letter of the 10th of April, 1817, delivered to me a few weeks since by Mr. A. Cooke, to whom in return for his friendly office in bringing the letter, I endeavoured to recommend the Saviour; when he returns, intreat him again from me to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, that he may be saved. Oh, my dear friend, while I am writing to you, and thinking of this dear Sandwich youth, Sandwich, and the chapel, and the congregation, and the young people, and the church members, and the singers,—the sight of my mind overpowers the sight of the body

I can hardly see to guide my pen, and I must keep the paper at a distance when I think of you all, or my tears would render the writing illegible. Would that I had been more earnest about souls, when I was among you! God forgive my icy heart.—It is too late now I am separated from the place by a great gulph, 15000 miles wide. But speak to the young people, especially, for me: I can be more free with them now. Tell them, and all who will hear it, that my heart sobs and sighs for their salvation. Say unto them, on behalf of him who once laboured among you, but now is far off, and cannot see you in the flesh, my request is, that you be reconciled to God; and say again, I beseech you for Christ's sake, seek the Lord while he is to be found. I think if they could see me now, it would be a

sermon. But I must repress these feelings, lest I write incoherently, and leave no room to add a word concerning the dealings of the Lord with me and mine here. Doubtless you have heard the particulars, that we were blessed with a prosperous voyage, and landed in safety at Calcutta, the 7th of September, 1816: since then our time has been consumed principally in studying the Bengalee language; and secondly, in attending to the European congregation. As to the language, my much valued colleague, Mr. Keith, and myself, have so far made progress as to be able to preach short sermons to the natives, — to read the Scriptures to them, — and to engage in prayer; this we do as often as circumstances will admit. We are thus acting the part of little birds in their first attempts to fly; or like little boys, when they first venture on the ice; — we too cannot but expect more or less falls and failures; but our God is not a being who despises the day of small things, and in his strength we go on trusting to see great things. If you could see what I have seen, and hear what I have heard, you would be almost ready to take a passage in the first East India-man in the Downs, and come to the help of the Lord, and of the poor benighted Hindoos. I have seen them put iron hooks into the muscles of their backs, and drawn up by these to the end of a cross-beam, which turns round at the top of a high post, and they are whirled with great velocity round a large circumference, such as Sandwich Chapel would not contain. The people all laugh with brutal insensibility, and feel no more sympathy than the post on which the cross-beam turns. Sometimes the muscles of the back break, and the unhappy victim is usually dashed to pieces in the fall; but even such an event would excite little or no commiseration. A man with a spit through his tongue came to my house for a reward. Do not such people as these need the gospel? The number of their gods is computed at 330 millions. Bless God, the true God, my brethren, for having revealed himself and his blessed Son to your understandings. Say any thing that is kind for me to my beloved friends, the Toomer's, the Tomlins', and the long list of old friends, whose names are in my heart, though there is no room for them in my letter. May Jesus Christ, the friend of sinners, save the poor heathen, and bless you all abundantly. So prays yours truly,

H. TOWNLEY.

My dearest wife and child are both well.

*Hamburg.*  
AMONG all the cities of the continent, Hamburg is distinguished by the importance of its situation, in relation to Great Britain. From the extent of its

commerce, and its intimate connexion with England, it contains many British residents, and a considerable number of the English are frequently paying it transient visits of business or curiosity. Like many other opulent cities, Hamburg is the seat of much profligacy; and if the existence of maladies calls for the application of a remedy, surely the prevalence of immoral contagion requires some means to be employed to counteract its baneful influence. Public divine worship is one of the most effectual preventives of these disorders. In Hamburg, instruction in christian doctrine, and in the morality of the gospel, is of the utmost importance, not only for the positive good of which it is the parent, but because it withdraws many from those scenes and spectacles of depravity which otherwise they would witness, and which must produce an injurious effect on their mind and character. It is therefore much to be regretted, that, for a considerable period after the evacuation of Hamburg by the French troops, there was no public service in the English language. About the latter end of the year 1815, some pious individuals in Scotland, strongly impressed with a sense of the value of religious instruction, sent out a minister whom they supported for eighteen months at their own cost, and his zealous labours were attended with success. Many persons assembled in a private house to enjoy his ministry, and still remember his services with gratitude.

In the spring of last year, their present highly respected minister, the Rev. George D. Mudie, arrived, and the private house quickly became insufficient to accommodate the people who were willing to hear. Measures were therefore adopted to render that arrangement permanent, which before had been but temporary, and in a measure to relieve those who had hitherto borne the entire expense. A public subscription was commenced, and its success affords every hope that the minister will receive adequate support from his congregation. A petition was prepared and presented to the senate, who, by a public act, have assured the church of the protection of government, and other privileges. A committee of management was appointed; and Mr. Mudie, who, in the meantime had been regularly ordained in England, received a formal and unanimous invitation to take on him the pastoral care of the christian society. A second petition was preferred to the senate for a certain public building at their disposal, but has not met with success. The congregation, however, obtained the temporary use of the French reformed chapel, in which their public worship is still held. But they are subjected to numerous inconven-

ences. The place is too small, not being capable of accommodating more than two hundred persons. They are restricted to one service on the Sunday, and are obliged to assemble at an early hour: the rent they pay is considerable, and they have possession only during pleasure. Under these circumstances, it is highly desirable, if not absolutely necessary, to obtain some other place. No suitable building can be procured, except at an extravagant rent; and to build, will be expensive. Hamburg, being inclosed by fortifications, and being very populous, land is of great value, and it is computed that the total expense of purchasing ground, and erecting a commodious chapel, capable of containing 500 persons, would amount to nearly 2000*l.* sterling; a sum which the congregation cannot raise. They have already contributed, with much effort, about 300*l.* and are in full expectation of two more, making in the whole between five and six hundred pounds. Their only remaining resource appears to be in the liberality of christian friends in England, to whom, it is earnestly hoped, these statements and this appeal will not be offered in vain.

The pastor of the church in Hamburg is expected soon to arrive in London, when further particulars of this interesting case will be presented to the religious public.

#### Buckingham Association.

A benevolent friend wishes us to invite the attention of our readers, especially the natives of Buckingham, resident in London, to the following plan, communicated in a letter to the Rev. Mr. Strutt, for the instruction of the destitute villages in that neighbourhood. He offers to contribute five pounds himself in support of an object so truly laudable, and hopes many will follow his example.—Contributions for this purpose will be received at the Publisher's of this Magazine.

"The first object of our attention is the assistance of newly-formed congregations, till, under the divine blessing, they shall have acquired sufficient strength to go alone. Our next object is the villages. To do any thing with effect, or with the prospect of success, it is necessary that we employ an itinerant preacher. It was ascertained that in the vicinity of *Banbury*, there are sixty-five villages destitute of such religious instruction as is likely to promote the salvation of their inhabitants. But our funds do not at present afford us the prospect of being able to support a preacher. The subscriptions, collections, &c. which we have already obtained for the present year, amount to about 38*l.* We may, perhaps, in the course of the year, be able to obtain 10 or 15*l.* more.

This I consider a favourable commencement for so small an association."

*London Association in aid of the Moravians.* The *Jemima*, Captain Frazer, arrived in the River Thames, on Friday, October the 15th, 1818, from the coast of Labrador, after an expeditious voyage of only twenty-seven days. It is now fifty-four years since the settlements of the Brethren on that coast were first formed; and the vessel on which they are dependent for their existence has been safely conveyed to and from the settlements without intermission annually, during the whole of that period, though the navigation is one of the most difficult and dangerous in the world;—a striking proof of the protecting care of that Almighty Saviour on whom these patient labourers in the vineyard so simply rely, and whose gospel they so faithfully preach. We understand that a Ladies' Association has been formed in connexion with the London Association, under the title of "The Ladies' Aid to the Moravian Missions," and that any ladies wishing to assist it may do so by addressing Miss Elms, the Secretary, King's Parade, Chelsea; Mrs. Alday, Brompton Crescent; or Miss Dunkin, West Square, Lambeth. An Association has also been formed at Glasgow in the same benevolent cause, which has recently sent up 150*l.* a considerable part of it the produce of a sermon by the Rev. Dr. Chalmers. The Rev. J. Clayton, jun. will preach a sermon for this institution on Tuesday evening, the 17th of November, at Oxendon chapel.

#### Deaths of Ministers.

We have the painful duty of recording this month, the decease of three excellent ministers of the gospel.

On the 9th of October died, after a long illness, the Rev. Benjamin Gaffee, pastor of the Independent church at Stansted, Essex, formerly of New Broad Street, London. This excellent man was enabled to manifest a truly christian temper under very trying afflictions, both personal and relative; and departed to his rest in possession of unshaken hope, founded upon the grace and righteousness of the Redeemer. On the 18th, Mr. Chaplin, of Bishop Stortford, preached a funeral discourse to the mourning congregation, from *Acts xiv. 22*, latter part. A text chosen by the deceased for the solemn occasion.

September the 28th died, the Rev. R. Sloper, who had for many years sustained, with great respectability, the office of pastor in the Independent church at Devizes. His character and talents have long been held in high and deserved esteem. We hope to be able to do them more ample justice hereafter.

October 11th died, the Rev. Dr. Bal-

four, of the High Kirk, in the city of Glasgow. This excellent man has been a very distinguished ornament to the Kirk of Scotland ; and in the populous city of Glasgow, has laboured for many years, with great success. The Doctor was well known and highly esteemed in England. His pulpit talents were very superior, his eloquence unusually mellifluous, and his doctrine uniformly Calvinistic. He ministered to one of the largest congregations in the city of Glasgow, where his loss is deeply, and will be long felt. May the Lord of the harvest send forth more labourers into his harvest, to succeed those who have borne "the heat and burden of the day."

#### *Recent Outrage and Persecution.*

A SHORT time ago a methodist chapel was opened in a village near Weymouth ; on which occasion a number of christian friends, and several ministers, chiefly from that town attended. During the evening service, when the chapel was crowded with hearers, some slight disturbance was made on the outside by persons disaffected to the cause ; but upon prompt and prudent measures being adopted, peace was soon restored. But about eight o'clock, when the ministers and their friends were preparing to return

home, a mob of about a hundred persons were assembled around a chaise and another carriage, which were in attendance to convey them. These persons behaved in the most turbulent and insulting manner. A lady, in attempting to get into the carriage, was pushed down a bank by the side of the road ; the horses were much frightened by the tumult and noise, and the driver, for a considerable time, was unable to proceed. Several ladies and gentlemen were under the necessity of walking a considerable distance, exposed to the most wanton and brutal insults. For more than two miles, and on a very bad road, the drivers, horses, carriages, and company, were pelted by the mob ; the windows of the chaise were broken, and the vehicles otherwise damaged. One lady, who rode by the side of the driver, received a severe blow on her head, and the driver himself was so severely injured by another, that it was apprehended his life was in danger. For the sake of the perpetrators of the outrage themselves, as well as to protect peaceful and pious christians in worshipping God according to the dictates of their consciences, we sincerely hope that no pains will be spared to ascertain and punish the principals in this disgraceful affair.

#### WOLVERHAMPTON CASE.

A pamphlet has appeared in reference to the above case, by the Rev. J. Robertson, of Stretton-under-Fosse, in which he charges us, as the editors of this Magazine, with injustice and partiality, in refusing to insert a second communication from him on the subject. We owe it, therefore, to the public, and to ourselves, to give the following statement by way of explanation. A letter from Mr. Robertson, which we solicited, in consequence of a private communication from him to the committee for conducting this work, appeared to us to contain some very important remarks on religious liberty, in its application to the case at Wolverhampton, and we therefore gave it insertion. To this letter, we received a reply, signed by nine very respectable ministers who had patronized the case, which we felt ourselves bound in duty to insert also, and which, we believe, appeared to the generality of our readers to place the Wolverhampton case on very different grounds from that on which Mr. Robertson is so anxious to discuss it. At the same time we received several other replies from various quarters, to which the limits of our work forbade us to pay any attention. Towards the end of the month, a letter was forwarded to us for publication from Mr. Robertson, in answer to the reply which had been inserted ; but which, upon a careful perusal of it, appeared to us to contain nothing new in argument, but simply to re-state and re-assert all that his first letter contained, without at all meeting the case upon the only principle upon which its patrons pretend to justify it. This letter appeared to us to disclose very irritated feelings. As we could see no good end to be answered by prolonging a controversy which had taken this turn ; and on which it appeared all had been stated by Mr. Robertson, which could be stated, we determined to suspend it. We did not, indeed, assign the full reason for this determination, because we did not wish to wound the mind of Mr. Robertson, by publishing our opinion of his second letter, and we regret that he has now compelled us to take this step. There are few, we imagine, who, after this explanation, can blame us for the part we have taken. We thank Mr. Robertson for the favourable opinion he has expressed of our work, and beg to assure him, that, in the conduct of it, we feel as much determined, as he can be, to assert, in a firm, though not in an *intemperate* and *dogmatical* manner, all those principles which we deem to be important ; and such are the principles of religious liberty, and of enlightened and conscientious dissent. We do not propose to take any further notice of his pamphlet, which, perhaps, may receive attention from some other quarter, as he seems to have dealt his censures around him with an unsparing hand, and in a spirit which appears to us to deserve the severest reprehension.

